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The Week

THE Senate committee investigating the aftermath of the oil scandal has at last decided to grasp the nettle and examine the records of President Harding and his wife to see whether there were at any time among their assets Liberty bonds which had formed part of the "profits" of the Continental Trading Company, Ltd. Painful as it is to bring up suspicions directed against the memory of a former President, who is now dead, it is well that this investigation should be made and the matter cleared up once and for all. For years, whispers have been heard about the connection of President Harding with the oil scandal. It has been said that his nomination in 1920 was the result of a secret deal with oil interests, that he subsequently gambled in oil stocks while in the White House, that his newspaper, the Marion Star, was sold at an excessive valuation, part of which represented an endeavor to recoup him for losses or to conceal the origin of assets which he would otherwise have had a hard time explaining. This last story the present owners of the Star deny; they brought a libel suit against Frank A. Vanderlip when he repeated it in public, the case being settled out of court. It is to be hoped that the investigators for the Senate committee will not rest until they have found out as large a fraction of the truth as is humanly possible so long after the event. If the stories should turn out to be false, the investigation will have been as well justified as will be the case if they turn out to be true.

SENATOR Borah's proposal to raise $160,000 and return to Harry Sinclair his 1923 gift to the Republican campaign fund is the sort of gesture which most people instinctively applaud. When the cheering is over, however, there remain three things which should be said about it. First, it is doubtful whether he will get as much as $160,000. Second, if he does so, the process is likely to be so lengthy that the significance of the scheme will be forgotten before it is ended. Third, it will in no sense signify a reformation on the part of those elements in the party responsible for this whole sorry business. The money will come from persons who had nothing to do with those scandals and would have been as much opposed to them at the time as they are now. There is not the slightest evidence that any one of the chief figures in the whole business really regrets what he did. There is the best of reasons to believe on the contrary that they are sorry only that they were found out. This is the attitude of the oil industry as a whole, which continues to pay every possible honor to Sinclair, Stewart and the rest. It is the attitude, moreover, of the conservative wing of the Republican party which, despite Senator Borah, is still in control and will probably continue in control for a long time to come. Men do not change their philosophy under pressure from without.

AFTER the defeat of the Walsh resolution for a senatorial investigation of the electric power companies, the two remaining power issues before Congress have been the question of the use of Muscle Shoals and the construction of Boulder Dam. The Senate, many of whose members were apparently surprised by the strong hostile reaction to their ad-

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verse vote on the Walsh resolution, has passed the Norris bill for public operation of Muscle Shoals, and for the use of any profits to aid the development of fertilizer. If the House will pass this bill too, the important Muscle Shoals issue will at last be settled in the best possible way, though to the discomfiture of the private power interests. The public will have retained the right to operate a great source of power, which may be used as a means of checking up on the enormous profits of the private companies. The deceptive plea of private concerns that, if Muscle Shoals were passed over to them, they would use it to make cheap fertilizer for the farmers, has been thoroughly exposed by the ample expert testimony that cheap fertilizer cannot be made there. But it is legitimate to use any profits from Muscle Shoals power to aid the production of fertilizers. Meanwhile the Swing-Johnson bill for Boulder Dam has been reported favorably to the House. It is said that this bill has a better chance of passage than ever before. Contrary to the power interests' wishes, it retains a clause allowing the government the alternative of developing the power itself, or leasing the power rights. A group of progressives under the leadership of Representative Davenport is engaged in the praiseworthy effort to amend this clause so that government development of the power is compulsory. But even without that change, passage of the Swing-Johnson bill would checkmate the contemplated grab by the power companies.

THE long epistle to the Porto Ricans which President Coolidge signed last week, based on material, no doubt, supplied to him by the Bureau of Insular Affairs, went over familiar ground. Porto Rico, he says, has been more prosperous, and conditions have been more orderly, since the American occupation than before. This has been true in every other tropical country occupied by us, and there is little reason to doubt it in Porto Rico's case. The death rate has been cut in two, smallpox eliminated, school attendance is seven times greater, exports are nine times greater. Because Porto Rico is a territory of the United States, her coffee goes to Cuba under a special low tariff. Since her bonds are tax-exempt, she saves 2 percent per annum in interest. He treasury is largely dependent on taxes and duties which the United States might take away from the island but does not. She has actually more freedom, the President argues, than is enjoyed by the American states.

TO ALL this the Porto Ricans reply that most of it is true, but has nothing to do with the case. They ask the right of electing their own governor, with the choice not necessarily restricted to the natives of the island. How could their relationship to the United States be endangered by granting that right, since all the acts of the Porto Rican legislature are subject to the veto of the United States Congress? It may be true that their government enjoys wide freedom, but what use is this to the islanders, since its central figure is a governor appointed from Washington, who may be as good as Townsend or as bad as E. Mont Reily, without their having anything to say about it? As for the argument that the tariff has been a blessing, the Porto Ricans reply that the common people have to pay high prices on tariff-protected imported goods, while the vast sugar, tobacco and coffee estates, also tariff-protected, are nearly all subjected to absentee ownership, so that the profits they earn are taken out of the country practically intact. And finally, President Coolidge has read history to little avail if he thinks any people can be satisfied when told: "You don't need freedom, look how prosperous you are!"

THE Senate's refusal to confirm the renomination of Mr. Esch to the Interstate Commerce Commission is an unjustifiable and dangerous action, reflecting little credit on those responsible for it. The principal objection to him was the fact that he changed his position on a question concerning freight rates on coal to the Great Lake ports, finally voting in a way that certain Southern Senators did not like. There is not the slightest evidence that political considerations or prejudice influenced Mr. Esch's decision in this matter; those who voted with him in the majority include some of the ablest and most fair-minded commissioners, and ample economic justification for the decision is contained in the records of the case. If sectional interest is thus to hamper the independence of administrative and quasi-judicial commissions, deciding on important economic questions, the whole policy of public regulation is imperilled. On this account special blame should rest on those Northwestern Senators with progressive leanings who joined the Southerners to defeat Mr. Esch.

Republicanism and Corruption

THE Republican leaders occupy in relation to the oil scandal a peculiarly humiliating position. Their party organization is convicted of having accepted large sums of money from a man who had corruptly bought from a Republican administration public property of enormous value, and of trying to conceal the source of the contribution. Doubtless many of them would like to repudiate, in some emphatic and unequivocal way, the whole transaction, and all who were expressly responsible for it. For, by remaining silent and doing nothing about it, they are conniving at it and in a measure assuming responsiblity for it. Yet if they seek some way of repudiating it, as Senators Borah and Capper are doing, they cannot avoid the public censure of several of the most important officials and individuals in their party, and at the beginning of a

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presidential campaign they advertise their acceptance of a huge political liability. Repentance in public may be a moral, but it is not a political, asset. The Republican candidate would find himself more handicapped by some public confession of chagrin at the recent record of his party officials than he would by following President Coolidge's example in 1924 and remaining silent. For this reason, he and the other party leaders will presumably do their best to ignore the turpitude of official Republicanism and try, by saying nothing and fishing for red herrings, to escape the just penalties of their misbehavior.

Many people are, consequently, asking the question whether they will get away with a policy of silence as successfully as they did in 1924. The Washington correspondent of the New Republic, T. R. B., answers it by guessing that they will. He feels doubtful about the election of the Republican candidate, but he is doubtful chiefly on account of the diminished prosperity of the country and presumably the increased popular economic discontent. If this discontent continues, many voters will invoke Republican misbehavior as a disinterested excuse for voting the Democratic ticket, but in that event it will be the economic grievance rather than corruption which will constitute the unforgivable offense. In his opinion, the American people are not offended by official corruption: they always expect it and frequently approve it.

There are many facts which appear to confirm T. R. B.'s cynical conclusion. A large majority of American voters support one party or the other for reasons which are not much influenced by the proof of corruption in the party to which the voter belongs. The ordinary politician is judged by his ability to get results. He is willing and accustomed to elect his candidates, if necessary, by dubious or actually corrupt practices. It is his primary business to deliver the vote, and the most congenial and effective way of manufacturing votes is to spend lots of money. The "better element" in both parties who contribute the money have cultivated a convenient habit of not inquiring too closely about the way in which the money is spent. Until recently, no doubt, almost all large cities could boast of fairly vigorous groups of local reformers, who would occasionally lead revolts against the party machine and its questionable methods, but they have always been amateurs in politics, and their protests usually wilted after election. They never took sufficient account of the economic motivation of political groupings or the strength of the inducement in a capitalist democracy to force the voters into party molds and so establish permanent majorities. A complicated political system like ours, in which there are so many elections and so much voting, and in which millions of votes have to be recruited and polled, requires for its operation the services of professional politicians who are all more or less mercenary and all accustomed in one way or another to buy votes. They are cynical by necessity, and their cynicism has come to dominate the popular attitude toward party politics. It is generally acknowledged to be an occupation in which cheating is permitted by the rules of the game.

There is little to choose in this respect between the machines of the two parties. Republicanism in Chicago and Philadelphia is corrupt to the core, but Democratic politics in Boston, Chicago and Jersey City is not much better. Tammany in New York has always lived on a more or less generous supply of petty or major graft. Is it any wonder that the ordinary American voter during a period of political apathy like the present does not allow his vote to be decided by the exposure of dishonesty on the part of one group of party politicians? He knows that they all live on party graft of a kind. He does not know how to get rid of it. It is a matter of chance whether the greedy and corrupt birds happen to have gathered at the moment in a Republican or a Democratic field.

In spite of the fact, consequently, that the Republican party richly deserved in 1924 to be thrown out of office on the score of corruption and more than ever deserves the same today, it is not quite fair to accuse voters, who refuse to throw it out, of a positive preference for corruption. They have to consider whether or not the Democratic party, which is the only alternative they know, promises to be any substantial improvement. In 1924, the Democratic candidate, John Davis, was a far abler and a more scrupulous man than Mr. Coolidge, but he could not, even if he would, assume leadership and rise above the level of his party. In nominating him the Democrats were trying to rid themselves cheaply of the damning consequences of their own dissensions rather than to select as their candidate a fighting opponent of Republicanism. Mr. Davis was himself one of the favorite lawyers of the big industrial and financial interests which dominate the Republican party. He could not divine and dramatize the semi-conscious needs and impulses of the American people for something better than Republicanism and no less real. The ordinary American voter, in preferring President Coolidge to him, was not expressing a preference for corruption. But the La Follette agitation had aroused his apprehensions rather than his interest, and he decided not to take any risks. As long as he was disposed to vote for king and country, Coolidge and the Republican party suited his need better than John Davis and the Democratic party.

The Democratic candidate who wishes to take advantage of Republican corruption for the benefit of his own election should denounce it, not as the product of individual or party wrong-doing which could be cured by turning the rascals out, but as the normal product of the Republican subordination of the government of the country to business, and particularly to big business. As long as business men look to government for favors and rule out any

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action by government in relation to business, which seeks to rationalize or socialize rather than merely to encourage it, as disastrous in its effects and un-American in theory, for so long will business men buy votes, employ professional politicians for the purpose and extort from the party nominees corrupt bargains of one kind or another. A democracy which permits itself to become a plutocracy is bound to be poisoned by corruption. The only way to attack the corruption is to undermine the plutocracy. The Republicans themselves testify to the truth of this reasoning by their unwillingness to repudiate the business men and politicians who are implicated in the recent scandals, and their heroic efforts to prevent the full ramifications of the scandal from being revealed. The cause of Harding, Mellon, Hays and Sinclair is bound inextricably with their cause. They have exposed themselves to an assault which, in the hands of a skillful campaigner and a sympathetic popular figure, may shake for the moment their hold upon the federal government.

If there is any truth in this analysis, the effect of the recent exposures on the election of 1928 will depend chiefly upon the way in which the Democratic candidate exploits them to push home his attack on the Republican system. He has an opportunity of doing what La Follette tried in vain to do in 1924 and what John Davis was not equipped to do—that is, to indict Republicanism precisely because it is the party agency of a plutocracy which is, in its own interest, committed to controlling the American government by the spending of money. The opportunity depends in part upon a continuation of a large volume of unemployment and the existence of economic discontent in city and country, but it is not wholly dependent upon the continuation of economic grievances. The memory of recent unemployment on a large scale in the cities and the continued agricultural depression, combined with the fact that the Republicans have done nothing about it, will provide him during the campaign with sufficient ammunition. He can prove that this business man's government which so easily succumbs to corruption and which bases its whole popular case on prosperity, is incapable of guaranteeing prosperity to many millions of American citizens and is, in its make-up and propaganda, a colossal fraud. The fundamental object of its machinery of corruption is not that of selling illegal favors to Sinclairs and Dohenys (although such is its incidental result), but of stifling any effective political agitation against the indefinite perpetuation of its own privileges. An attack along these lines would obtain from the American people a better hearing in 1928 than it could in 1924. They are gradually emerging from the extremely apprehensive and suggestible condition of mass emotion which their government cultivated in them during the War. They are better prepared to listen attentively to an attack on Republicanism as essentially irresponsible and corrupt government by mercenary politicians for the benefit of special business interests than they were four years ago. The Democratic candidate who launches such an attack could count upon recruiting, not only a very considerable proportion of the 5,000,000 La Follette voters but also many Republicans who, after much hesitation, finally voted for Coolidge in 1924 because they did not know what else to do.

Of the available Democratic candidates, Governor Smith is most capable of driving home this particular attack. As a politician of Tammany origin, it would be a little thick for him to indict the members of the Republican political machine merely for personal and group dishonesty. The Tammany record is overlaid with many similar frauds and betrayals which Tammany voters have been taught to ignore. But this Republican dishonesty is associated with the dogmatic refusal on their part to distinguish between business which deserves to be let alone or encouraged and business which needs to be corrected. He cannot realistically and effectively attack the dishonesty without calling the attention of public opinion to the flaws in this Republican dogma and proposing positive measures to give reality to the criticism of business. In so doing he will be forcing the hand of his own party, which, if left alone, is perfectly willing to remain the accomplice of Republicanism; but that is not an impossible task. For several generations the Democratic party, if it was to amount to anything, has always had to be forced into activity by some leader such as Bryan or Wilson. Governor Smith has an off chance of electing himself by these means, and, once President, he could use the enormous prestige of that office and its opportunity for initiative to repeat what he has done in New York State—that is, to build up a personal following, irrespective of party, and to discredit Republicanism. But the great difference would be that in this new and larger area of activity he would, in order to discredit Republicanism, have to understand the weakness of Republican economics and bring that weakness home to the American people.

Could Regulation Cure Coal?

INVESTIGATION of the deplorable conditions in the bituminous coal industry by a Senate committee has at last led to a trail which appears to stretch out of the morass of disorganization toward firm footing. John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers, and several of the operators have joined in asking Congress for regulation of the industry by a federal board, in somewhat the same way as the railroad industry is regulated by the Interstate Commerce Commission. This is the first time, so far as we know, that responsible representatives of the industry have recognized a need of the sort of remedy so frequently recommended by experts who have studied the situation. It is the first time that these representatives

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have abandoned their futile belief in the efficacy of "free competition" to cure the ills of coal.

What could an Interstate Coal Commission do for the miners, the operators and the public? In order to answer this question we must first remind ourselves again of the basic difficulties with which it would have to deal. If all the developed coal mines were working on anything like full time, with the available supply of miners, they would turn out far more than the market could normally absorb. The over-development of the industry arose in the first place largely from wide fluctuations in demand, caused by the alternation of boom and depression, from the frequent strikes, as a result of which non-union sections would expand in order to supply the temporary need, and from inadequacy of railway transportation facilities, which would occasionally create an artificial shortage in the market and boost the price. In recent years there have been no marked booms or depressions in general industry, and the transportation shortage has been remedied. But the steady industrial expansion of the country has not created a sufficient demand to absorb the coal surplus, because of the growing use of other sources of energy, such as water power and oil, and the much more efficient utilization of coal itself in railroad locomotives and furnaces.

With an over-supply of coal constantly bearing on the markets, cut-throat competition drove prices down. This did not solve the problem by increasing the demand. Lower prices do not much influence the demand for soft coal, since fuel is one of the minor costs of production, and any conceivable reduction in fuel will not allow the producers who burn it to expand their own markets very much on that account. The demand for coal follows the major fluctuations of the business tide, rather than following the price of coal itself.

Nor have the low prices remedied the situation by concentrating production in the larger and more efficient companies. Real efficiency in coal mining demands a heavy investment in plant and machinery, and a correspondingly large overhead expense necessary to carry the capital burden. But there is a wide margin of small or "snowbird" mines which have little or no capital burden to carry when they are forced to shut down, and are always ready to spring into production the moment the market gives them any encouragement. This they would do if any combination of large coal interests should endeavor to raise the price. Low prices for coal do not permanently eliminate the small and inefficient producer. It is the ability to produce on small investment which has retarded the consolidation of controlling interests in coal mining such as have arisen in steel and other basic industries, to stabilize prices at a profitable level.

Intense competition at low prices has, with the semi-organized condition of labor in the industry, led to placing much of the burden on the backs of the workers by drastic wage cuts. The non-union sections in West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee already possessed certain natural advantages in the matter of quality of the coals they owned, and ease of mining. But they made still more secure their growing hold on the market by cutting wages far below the level which the union operators in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois and elsewhere had contracted to maintain. In spite of heroic efforts, the union has been unable, in the face of the aid which the courts and police have given the non-union operators, to organize the southern fields. Some courts have recently held even that the attempt to extend or maintain the union is a restraint of interstate commerce, and hence contrary to the Sherman Act. This situation has led to unemployment and losses in the union regions, to abrogations of the wage contract and a shift to a non-union basis by some of the largest operators who had hitherto dealt with the union, and to the present strike, occasioned by the union miners' refusal to accept wage reductions at the termination of the agreement.

If the union miners should accept reductions, however, or if the union should be totally destroyed, the troubles of the operators would not be over. Having driven labor down to a minimum of subsistence by competitive wage-cutting, they would still be forced to carry on their never-ending battle for markets among themselves. On the other hand, a victory for the union in the present struggle would still leave the advantage with the non-union fields, and the union, by keeping up the costs of the companies by which it was recognized, and hence minimizing their activity, would shrivel into ineffectiveness. Imagine even the almost impossible event of a complete unionization of the industry: those miners who were employed might receive fair wages, but still the over-development of the mines would result in great unemployment and leave the industry unprofitable and inefficient in the main.

A regulatory commission with sufficient legal powers might attack this situation on three fronts at once. It might regulate coal prices, as the Interstate Commerce Commission regulates railroad rates, to provide a "fair return" on the investment. It might permit consolidations to be made, along lines which it conceived to be in the public interest, under an exemption from the anti-trust laws. The consolidation policy might include wholesale marketing companies, for better control of the industry. And the commission might buttress the consolidations against cut-throat competition, and so effectuate its control of prices, by declining to allow new mines to come into production, or to allow extension of operations to be undertaken by existing companies, without express permission in each case. These activities would have to be accompanied by the enforcement of standardized accounting, by valuation of the properties, and by supervision of the financial activities of the operating companies. The

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precedent of the railroad industry might further be followed by establishing a regular means of adjusting labor disputes through mediation and voluntary arbitration.

No doubt, regulation of this type would help a great deal. But it would have formidable obstacles to overcome. The first is a considerable doubt whether the exercise of such power would be constitutional. Is the mining of coal interstate commerce, and hence subject to federal regulation at all—except under general police powers? Courts have in the past held that it was not. (If, however, the recent anti-union injunctions should be sustained, declaring that interference with coal mining is restraint of interstate commerce, a new view of the matter might prevail.) And even if coal mining is interstate commerce, is it sufficiently "affected with a public interest" to be subject to the same type of regulation which has been devised for public utilities? Of course it is, as a matter of fact, but whether the courts could be brought to hold that view is a different question. They might do so if all concerned were to agree that the regulation was necessary, but if influential interests should attack the plan, or a general prejudice against federal powers were aroused, they might easily throw the whole scheme out of the window, or enough of it so that it would not work.

A practical difficulty would arise from the attempt to limit production by licensing. Any owner of a coal property who was refused permission to work it would be entitled to compensation or damages of some sort. To refuse to allow a man to mine coal which he already owns is different from refusing to allow a railroad to build a new line, which it does not yet own. Where would the compensation come from, and how would it be paid? Some plan which would tap the profits of the operating section of the industry in order to indemnify its enforcedly idle units would be essential.

In view of these difficulties, some will suggest that it is better worth while to attempt to go straight to the heart of the matter by a program of nationalization. Interesting plans for national ownership and unitary operation have been formulated. One of these contemplates the formation of a national holding corporation, whose stock would be owned by the government. It would be governed by competent executives, and would be empowered to issue bonds with a fixed rate of interest in exchange for coal properties. In view of the depressed condition of the industry, many of its proprietors might be willing to make this exchange without the exercise of compulsion. If any essential units would not sell at a reasonable price, there would, of course, be no recourse except the exercise of eminent domain, and this effort would run afoul of the same constitutional objections that might interfere with a plan of regulation. If, however, these objections could be overcome, nationalization would have numerous advantages over regulation. It would substitute positive executive control for restrictive and negative checks. It would solve once for all the problem of compensating the owners of marginal mines and undeveloped deposits. And it would conserve for the whole people all the values that may adhere to coal in the long future, as the deposits become scarcer in relation to demand, and the need of this highly essential source of energy is more keenly felt, not only for the production of power, but for the many by-products which chemistry is showing the way to extract from it, such as synthetic rubber and gasoline.

Either regulation or nationalization, however, could hardly be effectuated without a daring political program, explained to the voters not merely in one national campaign, but in two or three. Either would require the type of political education which both of our major political parties seem incapable of giving us. In spite of the obvious need of some thorough reorganization of the industry, the Republicans apparently cannot move in the necessary direction because of their too close association with the prejudices and powers of existing industrial rulers. Could the Democrats do so? Their only hope of constituting themselves a significant alternative to the Republicans lies in whatever ability they may have to develop issues like this. The challenge which such issues offer to a candidate like Governor Smith provides the chief opportunity he has of rendering a lasting service to his party and his country.

Salvaging Our Nicaraguan Policy

THE already tangled situation in Nicaragua was made worse last week when the Chamber of Deputies ended its session after refusing to pass the "McCoy bill" designed to carry out the terms of the Stimson agreement and authorize American supervision of the elections next October. The action was taken by the Conservative followers of General Chamorro, erstwhile Nicaraguan dictator who was forced from office by the hostility of the United States. It was inspired, no doubt, by the belief that, if a fair election is held, the Liberals will win. They are regarded in Nicaragua as the party least friendly to the United States, and that would alone be enough to insure their popularity with the mass of the people. The result is that, if we go through with the arrangement, we must do so under the dubious authorization of a decree by Diaz, who is looked upon throughout Latin America, and not unfairly, as a mere puppet of the United States.

The famous "Stimson agreement," it is well to remember, was made under the strongest possible pressure, exerted against one of the parties to it. A revolution was in progress, which the Liberals,

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whether because of assistance from Mexico or for other reasons, were in a fair way to win when the armed forces of the United States intervened and prevented it. Strategic towns—and in one case even a railroad—which the Liberals were on the point of capturing were declared by the United States to be neutral territory, on the ground, in each case, that such action was necessary "to protect foreign lives and property." Another official plea was that we were acting to safeguard our right to build an interoceanic canal, although no faction in Nicaragua has indicated any serious objection to the canal, and the Sacasa Liberals have offered to sign any sort of pledge to that effect we may desire. When Colonel Stimson went to Nicaragua, the war seemed likely to continue interminably, with heavy loss of life and economic prostration, the Conservatives being unable to win and the Liberals prevented from doing so. Under the circumstances, the latter had no choice but to accept the Stimson proposal, particularly since they knew that if they did not, the Americans would proceed to still more drastic measures against them. Under the leadership of General Moncada, now the Liberals' presidential candidate, ten of the eleven chiefs of the army brought in their men, who surrendered their rifles in exchange for ten dollars each. The exception was Sandino, with whom we have now been fighting, for half a year, what amounts to a small and unofficial war, in which twenty-one Americans and an undetermined number of Nicaraguans have lost their lives.

The dilemma in which the United States finds herself is one in which every possible course is fraught with difficulty. If we go through with our plan for a supervised election, the Conservatives now have an excuse to argue that it was illegal, and to repudiate the result if, as seems probable, the Liberals win. In that case, we should find ourselves under a moral obligation to maintain a Liberal regime in power by the force of our bayonets, as we have lately been protecting a Conservative one. If the Conservatives should win, the Liberals can bring forward the argument that they accepted the Stimson agreement under duress, and in that case, also, we may be obliged to protect the government. With the exception of a few months three years ago, we have occupied Nicaragua continuously for the past sixteen years, and the end seems at least as far away as it was in 1912. If, on the other hand, we were to give up, as a bad job, the attempt to supervise the election, and withdraw our troops, there is every likelihood that fighting would break out again on the morrow of our departure. While the Liberals surrendered their arms when the Stimson agreement came into effect, they could undoubtedly find means to continue the war. They would have a bitter grievance against us for repudiating our pledge to them, and a well founded one.

On the whole, it is probably better for the United States to carry out the Stimson agreement than to abandon it at this late date. It is highly desirable that it should be legalized through some better means than a decree by Diaz, but if that is not possible, the fact should not be considered an insuperable obstacle. In the meantime, it seems clear that our immediate plan for military operations should be reconsidered. We now propose to suppress the Sandino rebellion at whatever cost, in the brief interval before the rainy season. Whether we are successful or not, the effort means that additional lives will be sacrificed, perhaps a large number of them. Feeling against us is rising higher among the people of Nicaragua; and the news that additional blood had been spilled (it is unlikely that Sandino himself will be taken alive) would cause a most dangerous reaction. The rank and file of the Liberals are already restive; if they were to repudiate both Moncada and the Stimson agreement, we should be in a dismal plight.

The Marines, of course, have no choice in this matter. President Coolidge and Secretary Kellogg must make the decision, and no one but themselves knows whether they are even considering the alternatives to their present course. Is it not possible to "bottle up" Sandino in the mountains and leave him there until after the election, for the new government to deal with? If such a course is impossible, could not a four-cornered conference be held, in which the United States, the Moncada Liberals, the Conservatives and Sandino would all be represented, to see whether some sort of compromise agreement cannot be reached? Sandino has suggested terms on which he is willing to make peace. The effort to reach agreement with him, if it failed, would still leave us free to continue the military campaign against him, and with a greatly improved public opinion in Nicaragua, Latin America, and indeed, throughout the world, at our backs. Animated by motives partly selfish, but partly also humanitarian, we have drifted into a situation in Nicaragua which is getting worse every day. It is high time the government at Washington began to consider the necessity for salvage.

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The Secret of High Wages

I

SINCE 1914, the buying power of the hourly earnings—real hourly earnings—of American factory workers has increased about 35 percent. Now European observers are flocking to the United States to discover why wages here have been rising so rapidly. About two-thirds of the advance occurred between 1914 and 1920. Everyone knows why workers were able to push up wages during the war and post-war boom. The amazing fact is that between 1920 and 1927, in the face of a decrease of about 10 percent in factory employment and of 30 percent in trade-union membership, real hourly earnings have increased over 11 percent. To explain this gain we must answer four questions: (1) Why did *money* wages decrease less than most prices during the depression of 1921? (2) Why did they recover rapidly in 1923? (3) Why have they not fallen subsequent to 1923 when non-agricultural wholesale prices have been declining? (4) How has it been possible for manufacturers to pay high money wages in the face of falling prices?

II

The best index of wage *rates* is hourly earnings. The National Industrial Conference Board found that the hourly earnings of factory workers decreased 14 percent between 1920 and 1921, and 19 percent between 1920 and 1922. Wage *rates* probably dropped 20 or 25 percent. But between 1920 and 1921 non-agricultural wholesale prices fell 31 percent. With 3,500,000 men out of work, why did employers not cut wages in proportion to other prices?

Two principal conditions explain the relatively small reductions in wages. One was the fear of labor trouble. During the war period, trade-union membership increased 88 percent. In 1919, the number of workers involved in strikes reached the unprecedented total of over 4,000,000. The dread of labor trouble was accentuated by the belief that large sections of American labor might come under the influence of radical leaders. This belief was stimulated by the general strikes in Seattle and Winnipeg, the advocacy of the Plumb Plan by the hitherto staid and conservative railroad brotherhoods, and the propaganda of the National Civic Federation, the National Security League, prominent politicians, and even of Mr. Gompers and his lieutenants, who skillfully represented conservative unionism as a needed bulwark against radicalism.

When the business boom collapsed, the employers' dread of labor trouble did not suddenly vanish. On the contrary, it was accentuated by their financial condition. During the boom period many manufacturers had speculated heavily in raw materials. The precipitous plunge of prices left these enterprises with large floating indebtedness which it was imperative for them to liquidate as rapidly as possible. They were in no position to risk the loss of production and the heavy expenses which a strike would entail. Thus the credit situation, created by the speculation in inventories, was a second restraint upon wage cuts.

III

Between the middle of 1922 and the end of 1923, the hourly earnings of factory workers increased over seven cents, or nearly 16 percent. The rise in wage *rates* no doubt was slightly less. This advance was due to a brief but active business boom, sufficiently intense to create real competition for both commodities and labor. Thus between April, 1922, and April, 1923, manufacturing output increased 32 percent, unfilled orders 64, non-agricultural wholesale prices 16, and factory employment 23.

Since 1923, the level of non-agricultural prices has fallen about 7 percent and the number of factory workers over 5 percent. But factory wages, instead of dropping, remained stationary until 1926, when they rose slightly. Why have wages not decreased in the face of falling prices and a diminishing need for labor?

It is probable that wage *rates* in manufacturing are lower today than in 1923. The announced wage increases, it is true, outnumber the decreases, but too much importance must not be attached to this. A survey which I made in 1924 indicated that among 175 factories, employing 220,000 men, half of the forces were employed under piece work or bonus systems. Everyone knows that as changes occur in products or processes, it is possible to make concealed reductions in wages by setting the rates on the new jobs a little tighter. The pressure of falling prices has undoubtedly caused employers to tighten up in setting new piece rates. The lower rates are not reflected in earnings because the workers exert themselves to maintain their customary income and because falling turn-over rates have led to an increase in the average experience and efficiency of the workers.

But why have not falling prices and shrinking need for factory labor produced decreases in *time* rates? One reason is the rise of nearly 3 percent in the cost of living between 1923 and 1926. During the War, employers discovered that labor trouble was likely to develop or labor turn-over to

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increase whenever wages lagged behind retail prices. Although managers are now less inclined to increase wages whenever the cost of living advances, they still watch it carefully and are not disposed to *reduce* wages when it is rising. A second influence sustaining time wages has been the fact that strong unions, helped by a boom in building and rising profits in railroading, advanced the union scale in the construction industry 13.4 percent between 1923 and 1926 and the hourly earnings of railroad workers 4.4 percent between 1923 and 1925. Building and railroading together employ roughly one-half as many wage-earners as manufacturing. When wages were rising among such a large body of manual workers, manufacturers were reluctant to announce decreases. Finally, hourly rates have been affected by the tendency for enterprises to base their labor policies upon the theory that mere supervision and inspection, however vigilant and competent, cannot prevent disgruntled and dissatisfied men from withholding efficiency. Wage cuts, by causing the withholding of output, might raise instead of lowering labor costs.

IV

But how have manufacturers been able to pay high wages in the face of falling prices? In no small degree because of savings in the cost of materials. Between 1919 and 1925, the value of factory output increased by over a billion dollars, but the cost of raw materials *decreased* almost the same amount, thus releasing two billion dollars for the payment of other expenses and dividends. This was 19 percent of the 1925 wage bill.

But the principal way in which manufacturers have maintained wages has been by increasing physical product per worker between 1919 and 1925 about 37 percent. Even allowing for abnormally low efficiency in 1919, it is evident there was a spectacular advance. The favorite explanations of it are: (1) the use of more mechanical power; (2) the employment of more capital; and (3) the concentration of production in larger plants. One of these explanations must be rejected and the other two can be accepted only with important qualifications.

Power costs substantially the same as in 1913. With money wages far above the 1913 level, one would expect manufacturers to substitute power for human muscle on a large scale. Strange to say, the power installed in factories increased more slowly between 1919 and 1925 than between 1899 and 1919. Between 1899 and 1919, primary horsepower installed per unit of factory output increased from 1 to 1.36; during the six years 1919-1925, it *decreased* from 1 to .95. To put it differently, from 1899 to 1919, primary horse-power installed increased 1.68 times faster than factory production, but between 1919 and 1925 factory production increased 1.29 times faster than primary horse-power. Clearly the great growth in output since 1919 cannot be explained by the use of more power.[1]

There is also difficulty in explaining the greater per capita output by additions to physical capital. The best indicators of the growth of physical capital are probably the rate of industrial building and the quantity of industrial machinery produced. During the six years ending in 1926, the volume of industrial building, measured by floor space, was 64 percent less than during the six years ending in 1920. As a rough index of the manufacture of industrial machinery, I have used the value of raw materials consumed in making it, deflated by the average price of metals and metal products.[2] Measuring production in this way, we find that the output of machinery increased on the average 29 percent during each of the three quinquennials between 1899 and 1914, 70 percent between 1914 and 1919, and only 12 percent between 1919 and 1925. Despite the crude character of these figures, I believe that it is safe to draw two inferences from them: (1) that manufacturing capital increased faster between 1914 and 1919 than between 1899 and 1914; and (2) that it increased more slowly between 1919 and 1925 than even between 1899 and 1914. These conclusions are confirmed by the machine tool shipments of twenty-nine machine tool builders. During the five years ending 1920, the shipments were 65 percent above the preceding quinquennial and 69 percent above the quinquennial ending in 1910. But the total shipments for the three years ending in 1923 were only 63 percent of the shipments *in the single year* 1919. In 1923 the shipments were less than half those of 1913.

Between 1914 and 1919, when physical capital was increasing most rapidly, output per factory worker was almost stationary. Between 1919 and 1925, when physical capital was growing slowly, output per worker was rising by leaps and bounds. How, then, can the growth in product per employee be attributed to the expansion of physical capital? This can be done only by assuming that capital added during the War was prevented by abnormal conditions from producing great increases in output until several years later. To this theory there are two objections: (1) much of the capital added during the War proved useless for peacetime production; and (2) it is scarcely reasonable to explain the rapid growth in output subsequent to 1923 by the additions to capital made so much earlier. Any validity the physical capital theory may have must, I think, be limited to the period before 1923.

There is some foundation for the theory that the advance in per capita output is a result of the

[1] There is no reason to believe that prime movers were used more intensively in 1925 than in 1919.

[2] Prior to 1914, separate figures on industrial machinery are not available. For the period of 1899 to 1914, therefore, I have measured production by the deflated values of raw material consumed by foundries and machine shops—a broader classification than industrial machinery.

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concentration of manufacturing into larger units. Measured by primary horse-power installed, the average size of factories increased less than 9 percent between 1914 and 1919, but nearly 41 percent between 1919 and 1925. But too much weight should not be attached to this explanation, because, between 1899 and 1914, when per capita output advanced only 10 percent, the average establishment grew almost as rapidly as between 1919 and 1925. In reply, it might be argued that the advantages of mass production are fully attained only when factories reach an ideal size, and that not until subsequent to 1919 did they attain it in large numbers. This argument probably has merit, but it seems inadequate to explain the extraordinary increase in output per worker.

V

But if the increase cannot be accounted for by the greater use of power, by additions to capital, or by larger plants, how can it be explained? The most plausible explanations appear to be: (1) the simplification and standardization movement; (2) improvements in machinery and methods; (3) more efficient management; and (4) more efficient labor.

To a substantial extent these influences are indistinguishable because some are, to a considerable extent, effects of the others. Concerning each of the four, quantitative information is scanty. Eighty simplified practice projects have been completed and there have been nearly 900 acceptances of them by trade associations and nearly 6,700 by individual firms. Since the War there has been a rapid expansion of industrial research, and this has produced many improvements in equipment and methods. Probably the most important cause of greater output has been better management, but quantitative evidence of the spread of up-to-date managerial methods is lacking. We do know that the wide price swings of the war and post-war periods greatly stimulated the adoption of more accurate cost accounting.

There are many reasons for believing that the efficiency of wage-earners has substantially increased. One of the most important is the spread of instalment buying. When it is remembered that half of the factory employees are piece or bonus workers, it is evident that the desire to keep up payments on cars and radios and at the same time to maintain customary standards of living has probably stimulated output. Another important influence has been the revolutionary changes which have occurred since 1916 in the selection and training of employees. Many of the changes were made during the War, and their effects were temporarily obscured by the abnormal condition of the labor market. The new labor policies, the spread of instalment buying, and other conditions have caused a great drop in labor turn-over. Prior to the War, the turn-over rate in manufacturing averaged in good years and bad not far from 100 percent. In 1926, an active year, the figures of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company show a rate of only 47 percent. Of especial significance has been the drop in the lay-off rate. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, collecting data for the period of 1910-1915 and for the year ending June 30, 1918, found an average lay-off rate of 13 percent in a group of 261 plants. For the period 1911-1915, I found a lay-off rate of 35 percent among 78 plants, employing 155,000 workers. The returns of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, however, show a rate of 6.0 percent in 1926, and 6.5 percent in 1927. The drop in the lay-off rate is a rough measure of the stabilization of employment. Stabilized employment, however, transforms the entire attitude of the wage-earner toward his job. The job ceases to be merely a temporary position which he is bound to lose soon and becomes, in a sense, a highly valuable piece of property which he can keep for the rest of his life *provided he meets the management's standards of efficiency*. The fact that he now has something worth keeping produces radical changes in his willingness to be efficient.

VI

This analysis of wage movements has run primarily in terms of market conditions, speculation in inventories, the financial condition of manufacturers, the fear of labor trouble, wage movements in other industries, and the labor policies of employers. The classical theory that wages depend upon labor's productivity does not appear to fit the period 1914 or 1919 to 1927. Statistics show quite plainly that wages went up first, and that both value, output and physical output per worker followed. Wages did not rise because production increased, but production increased because wages were high and managers did not consider it expedient to make large reductions. The period 1919-1927 appears to demonstrate that in modern industry, with its large staffs of technical specialists, the productivity of labor is an extremely flexible thing, which, if conditions are favorable, can be quickly and substantially increased. Possibly the increase could not go on indefinitely so rapidly as it has, and undoubtedly it could not be accomplished at all under unfavorable market conditions. Many economists believe that labor's bargaining power can enable wage-earners to obtain only what they produce. Now it appears that labor's *productivity* depends partly upon its bargaining power, that a strong labor movement is needed, not only in order to prevent manufacturers from reducing labor's wages, but in order to compel them to raise its efficiency. Opponents of unions are fond of estimating the huge cost of strikes. The recent history of wages indicates that the American people owe the unions a vote of thanks for striking or threatening to strike against wage cuts and thus forcing managements to make industry more productive.

SUMNER H. SLICHTER.

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Ibsen the Romantic

"My book *is* poetry, and if it is not poetry, then it will be."—Ibsen to Bjornson.

IBSEN was a poet during the earlier part of his life. He began as a lyricist, and his first plays are either in verse or are inspired by an imaginative contemplation of the past. When he was about forty, a change occurred, the importance of which has been differently estimated. Certain critics, both friendly and hostile, regard it as a fundamental change. They argue that with "The League of Youth" the real or realistic Ibsen begins to emerge, the singer dies, the social castigator is born, the scene clarifies and darkens, and ideas come to the front which do not necessarily contradict previous ideas, but which are given a prominence that entirely alters the dramatic emphasis. We pass from the epic to the domestic. Peer Gynt becomes Hialmar Ekdal, and Brand as Gregers Werle tears the spectacles of illusion from his eyes, and they work out their tragedy not among forests and fjords, but in a photographic studio opening into a sort of aviary. The aviary contains a few dead Christmas trees, also a water trough, some rabbits, but no bears, one wild duck, and that a damaged one. We could not be further from romance, the critics say, and turn, if they are friendly, to the character drawing, the technique, and the moral and social issues; if they are hostile, to the squalor. "Somewhere in the course of the battle of his life," writes Brandes, "Ibsen had a lyric Pegasus killed under him." "Novel and perilous nuisance," wrote the London Daily Telegraph. The critics agree in thinking that the poetry, if ever there was any, has gone.

Has it gone? Can the habits of forty years be set aside? Of twenty years—yes; most people are romantic at twenty, owing to lack of experience. As they grow older life offers various alternatives, such as worldliness or philosophy or the sense of humor, and they usually accept one of these. If, in spite of more solid temptations, they still cling to poetry, it is because a deep preference has to be satisfied. Ibsen was a poet at forty because he had that preference. He was a poet at sixty also. His continued interest in avalanches, water, trees, fire, mines, high places, traveling, was not accidental. Not only was he born a poet—he died one, and as soon as we try to understand him instead of asking him to teach us, the point becomes clearer.

He is, of course, not easy to understand. Two obstacles may be noted. In the first place he has got the deceptive air of a teacher, there is something in his method that implies a message, though the message really rested on passing irritabilities, and not on any permanent view of conduct or the universe. In the second place, he further throws us off the scent by taking a harsh or a depressing view of human relationships. As a rule, if a writer has a romantic temperament, he will find human relationships beautiful. His characters may hate one another or be unhappy together, but they will generate nobility or charm, they will never be squalid, whatever their other defects. And the crux in Ibsen is, that, though he had the romantic temperament, he found personal intercourse squalid. Sooner or later his characters draw their little knives, they rip up the present and the past, and the closer their intimacy, the better their opportunities for exchanging pain. Oswald Alving knows how to hurt his mother, Rosmer his mistress, and married couples are even more favorably placed. The Helmers, the Tesmans, the Wangels, Solnesses, Allmers, Borkmans, Rubeks—what a procession, equally incapable of comradeship and ecstasy. If they were heroic or happy once, it was before the curtain rose, and only survives as decay. And if they attain reconciliation, like the Rentheim sisters, the curtain has to fall. Their intercourse is worse than unfriendly, it is petty; moral ugliness trespasses into the esthetic. And when a play is full of such characters and evolves round their fortunes, how can it possibly be a romantic play? Poetry might perhaps be achieved if Ibsen's indignation was of the straight hitting sort, like Dante's. But for all its sincerity there is something automatic about it, he reminds us too often of father at the breakfast table after a bad night, sensitive to the defects of society as revealed by a chance glance at the newspaper, and apt to blame all parties for them indiscriminately. Now it is the position of women that upsets father, now the lies people tell, now their inability to lie, now the drains, now the newspaper itself, which he crumples up, but his helpers and servers have to retrieve it, for bad as are all political parties he must really see who got in at Rosmersholm. Seldom can a great genius have had so large a dose of domestic irritability. He was cross with his enemies and friends, with theater managers, professors, and students, and so cross with his countrymen for not volunteering to help the Danes in 1863 that he had to go to Italy to say so. He might have volunteered in person—he was in the prime of life at the time—but this never occurred to him, he preferred instead to write a scathing little satire about a Norwegian mother whose son was safe at the front. And it is (if one may adopt the phrase) precisely the volunteer spirit that is absent from his conception of human relationships. He put everything into them except the strength of his arm.

"Not a great writer . . . almost great, but marred

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by this lack of generosity." How readily the phrases rise to the lips! How false they are! For this nagging quality, this habitual bitterness—they are essential in his greatness, because they beckon to the poetry in him, and carry it with them under the ground. Underground. Into the depths of the sea. Had he been of heroic build and turned to the light and the sun, his gifts would have evaporated. But he was—thank heaven—subterranean, he loved narrow passages and darkness, and his later plays have a romantic intensity which not only rivals the romantic expansion of their predecessors, but is absolutely unique in literature. The trees in old Ekdal's aviary are as numerous as a forest because they are countless, the water in the chickens' trough includes all the waves on which the Vikings could sail. To his impassioned vision dead and damaged things, however contemptible socially, dwell for ever in the land of romance, and this is the secret of his so-called symbolism: a connection is found between objects that lead different types of existence; they reinforce one another and each lives more intensely than before. Consequently his stage throbs with a mysteriousness for which no obvious preparation has been made, with beckonings, tremblings, sudden compressions of the air, and his characters as they wrangle among the oval tables and pot-plants are not by any means alone, because an unseen power is watching them or slipping between their words.

A weaker dramatist who had this peculiar gift would try to get his effect by patches of fine writing, but with Ibsen as with Beethoven the beauty comes not from the tunes, but from the way they are used and are worked into the joints of the action. "The Master Builder" contains superb examples of this. The plot unfolds logically, the diction is flat and austere, the scene is a villa close to which another villa is being erected, the chief characters are an elderly couple and a young woman who is determined to get a thrill out of her visit, even if it entails breaking her host's neck. Hilda is a minx, and though her restlessness is not as vulgar as Hedda Gabler's it is quite as pernicious and lacks the saving gesture of suicide. That is one side of Hilda. But on the other side she touches Gerd and the Rat Wife and the Button Molder, she is a lure and an assessor, she comes from the non-human and asks for her kingdom and for castles in the air that shall rest on solid masonry, and from the moment she knocks at the door poetry filters into the play. Solness, when he listened to her, was neither a dead man nor an old fool. No prose memorial can be raised to him, and consequently Ibsen himself can say nothing when he falls from the scaffolding, and Bernard Shaw does not know that there is anything to say. But Hilda hears harps and voices in the air, and though her own voice may be that of a sadistic schoolgirl, the sound has nevertheless gone out into the dramatist's universe, the avalanches in "Brand" and "When We Dead Awaken" echo it, so does the metal in John Gabriel Borkman's mine. And it has all been done so competently. The symbolism never holds up the action because it is part of the action, and because Ibsen was a poet, to whom creation and craftsmanship were one. It is the same with the white horse in "Rosmersholm," the fire of life in "Ghosts," the gnawing pains in "Little Eyolf," the sea in "The Lady from the Sea," where Hilda's own stepmother voices more openly than usual the *malaise* that connects the forces of nature and the fortunes of men. Everything rings true and echoes far because it is in the exact place which its surroundings require.

The source of Ibsen's poetry is indefinable; presumably it comes from the same place as his view of human nature, otherwise they would not harmonize as they do in his art. The vehicle in which poetry reached him—that can easily be defined; it was, of course, the scenery of western and southwestern Norway. At some date previous to his Italian journey he must have had experiences of passionate intensity among the mountains, comparable to the early experiences of Wordsworth in the English lakes. All his life they kept returning to him, clothed in streams, trees, precipices, and hallowing his characters while they recriminated. In "Brand" and "Peer Gynt" they filled the stage; subsequently they shrank and concentrated; in the two last plays they again fill the stage and hasten the catastrophes by a shroud of snow. To compare Ibsen with Wordsworth is to scandalize the faithful in either camp, yet they had one important point in common; they were both of them haunted until the end of their lives by the romantic possibilities of scenery. Wordsworth fell into the residential fallacy; he continued to look at his gods direct, and to pin with decreasing success his precepts to the flanks of Helvellyn. Ibsen, wiser and greater, sank and smashed the Dovrëfjeld in the depths of the sea, the depths of the sea. He knew that he should find it again. Neither his satire nor his character drawing dwelt as deep; neither the problems he found in human conduct[1] nor the tentative solutions he propounded lay at the roots of his extraordinary heart. There, in that strange gnarled region, a primeval romanticism lurked, frozen or twisted or exuding slime, there was the nest of the Great Boyg. The Great Boyg did not strive, did not die, lay beneath good and evil, did not say one thing more than another:

> Forward or back, and it's just as far;
> Out or in, and it's just as strait.

What do the words mean, and, apart from their meaning, are they meant to be right? And if right, are the prayers of Solveig, which silence them for

[1] Wicksteed conveniently summarizes the problem as: "Suppress individuality and you have no life; assert it, and you have war and chaos."

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a moment, wrong? It is proper that we should ask such questions as these when focusing on the moral and social aspect of his work, and they have been excellently asked and answered by Bernard Shaw. But as soon as we shift the focus the questions go dim, the reformer becomes a dramatist, we shift again and the dramatist becomes a lyric poet, listening from first to last for the movements of the trolls. Ibsen is at bottom Peer Gynt. Side-whiskers and all, he is a boy bewitched:

> The boy has been sitting on his mother's lap.
> They two have been playing all the life-day long.

And though the brow that bends over him can scarcely be described as maternal, it will assuredly preserve him from the melting ladle as long as books are read or plays seen.

E. M. FORSTER.

The Re-Discovery of America

IX: *Gods and Cults of Power*

Mr. Frank's introductory articles traced the progress from what was one great Western Culture to the final individual release: the modern American. This dissolution worked through action of personal will, and action became the modern value, having such forms as discovery, science, nationalism, Protestantism. The machine embodies this ideal of action which in all its avatars leads to America. America began as "the Grave of Europe"; for in our Civil War the transplanted Sections of the decadent Whole of Europe finally died; leaving the Seed—the American who is no longer of Europe, who is a true end and a true beginning. Action which destroyed the dogmatic "knowledge" of Europe may create a new kind of knowledge: may become a positive instead of a negative force. In "The Sense of the Whole" it was established that the creating of Wholes is the basic human need: science, art, religion express it in an ascending series; nor can the ultimate Whole which is religion survive without sound substructures in science and art. The modern American lives in a new kind of Jungle—an uncontrolled wilderness created by the decayed and denatured fragments of a transplanted world and by the machine which is the embodiment of his own aggressive personal will. Mr. Frank is now studying this Jungle. His next article, which examines the American cult and paradox of Comfort, will appear in the New Republic for April 11. —THE EDITORS.

THE American gods of Power have a temple. It is the best we can show as formal articulation of what we are and what we love. We call it the Skyscraper. Fifty stories heaped alike one atop another express a herd; even as the Romanesque bespoke an integrating, the Gothic an integrated, the Renaissance Baroque a disintegrating people. We are a mass rigidly compressed into a simple structure; our rank is equalitarian, our aim is eminence, our dynamics is addition,[1] our clearest value is the power of the bulk of ourselves. So the house that stands for us has immensity for its aim, and for its method the monotonous piling of sameness upon sameness.

When the skyscraper aspires beyond these real traits, it becomes a hypocrite. The will to beauty begets the archeological lies that our ambitious architects smear over our steel structures. The skyscraper is a simple frame in which stones are laid like stuffing; as befits a right democracy the individual stones lack structural importance. In the Gothic, the stress of every separate block upholds the vault: each stone like each soul is indispensable. Yet it is the booty of such contrasting forms that one finds pilfered and stuck about our buildings. Thus, the crass splendor of the American cave-dwelling is concealed beneath some wistful need of the American soul.

In most rituals of our gods of Power, you will find a like hypocrisy. And in most commentaries on our way of life, one of two equal errors: either the pretence is taken at its face value, or it is sneered at. The truth is in neither camp. We are not a cultural people, nor are we primitives. We are neo-primitives. The memory of our cultural past colors our quest of values beyond those which our actual lives distil. The dissolution of the Mediterranean Whole lives in us, not as mere decay, but as *ferment*. This ferment it is which stirs us into make-believes of "truth" and "beauty." Our hypocrisy is like the normal process of the child, aping the man. Without it, we should be hopeless.

A realtor blowing "service" into inane speculations, Rotarians shouting brotherhood at lunch-time, Henry Ford justifying his flivver on the ground that it made better roads, the ad writer prating of esthetics, the politician mouthing God—are signs not of mere emptiness, but of an emptiness that would be full. Our business seems to provide no adequate flesh for our ideals, hence the abyss between what we do and what we say we are doing. But merely to strip our acts of the gorgeous names we call them is as sterile as to take the names for granted. The

[1] Note the unique importance which all American communities attach to growth in population.

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skyscraper may express the herd, but the motifs on its façade filched from Chartres or Gizeh express the need of the herd to be a herd no longer.

Let us not forget this as we proceed in our scrutiny of American life. *The pretence is quite as real as the fact.* Pretence is misplaced desire. It may be dynamic (consider the boy who plays the man); to the psychologist it is always of importance. The American lives in a pantheon of Power; but he has filled his world with highfalutin phrases that prove how intolerable to himself his world must be. He is something better than an honest savage: he is a savage in transition. But the problem is hard; transition is a dangerous age. Being imaginative and having behind him a vast lineage of dualistic thought, the American may render bearable his intolerable world, not by transfiguring it, but by perfecting an anesthetic system of lies to hide it. If so, his world will not grow; and he eventually, lost in his anesthesia, will die. For all the "good" lies cannot alter an essential want of opportunities for creative living. The way out is severely to dissociate fact from pretence: to determine the values that reside in both, and to bring *these* together.

In this spirit, we isolate the Power-fact in a few of our pretentious practices and cults:

Success: To Americans, success is an exercise of power visible to the world. If someone else can't see it, it is not success. The *end* of riches, popularity, public repute, not their content, makes success. This means that American success is a surface: what lies behind that surface may be bad or good or even noble: it is irrelevant to success.

The Machine: our household idol, as we have found, because it supplies the explicit objective for the American's self-adoration. Creature of his need of power action, it sensuously displays the means of his own ideal of behavior. He loves it autoerotically. Its body of surfaces must shine, as if it were the body of the beloved. It must gleam with oil as with ointment, glide silently as in soft raiment. Much of the male American's emotion (which American women need to become women) goes to the machine.

Efficiency and Service: the machine-ideal in these cults is clear in that their "values" are conceived as working externally and for some particular end related to success. No American is "efficient" because of work done within himself or within others: nor is he "of service" because he raises the level of mankind. "Service" is a particularly hideous cult, because it is the bare hypocrisy of Power.

The Corporation: an idol which combines the values of success and the machine. The individual is held within an organization that approaches the machine in action and that stands for success. The individual may or may not share in the material profits, he does share in the atmosphere of power. His loyalty is commanded to the company's success, so that he vicariously lives success. This sharing is called "service." Note that the business of the corporation is not really a value to him: it does not, like a church, subsist on his own spiritual increase or salvation. The corporation feeds him and physically "protects" him. But he would be the first to deny that these were ends proportionate with such terms as loyalty and service. The organization is a fictitious receptacle for his devotion as a social, even religious being; and its true function is just this: to enable him, lacking a divine object, to "serve"; lacking a love object, to be loyal. This is possible, only because of the individual's unconscious cult of power and love of the machine as an instrument of power. He adores the corporation for what it is, believing it to be what he adores. In this strange ritual, there is no true difference between employer and employee. They receive money for their job in varying degree, but both bring to it a cult that has no relevance to money. The corporation is an irrational means for worship to president and office-boy alike: both need it, both lack a better. Therefore, the magnate who at the company's annual love-feast orates to his employees of the "common cause" is telling the truth despite himself. What capitalist and "wage slave" share in the corporation is far deeper than the discrepancy of what they earn.[1]

The Fraternal Organization: an essential analogue of the commercial company, as are the Boy Scout movement and the State itself, in so far as these also command loyalty beyond their possible intrinsic spiritual content.

Popular Literature and Art: in no country is there such rife devotion, as in ours, to the arts and to their makers. The full reason for this will become more clear when we consider the American cult of comfort, as a corollary of the cult of Power. Here it is to be observed that our arts appeal in the extent that they approach the nature of the machine, and indoctrinate success. The vogue of the radio is almost independent of what comes over the air. The values to the "fan" of radio-art are: (1) the mechanism that does the work, (2) the thrill of success in getting the connection and (3) gregarious satisfaction in the contact with the body and heads of the Herd. The American short-story and motion-picture must be mechanical in their precision; originality and truth are readily sacrificed to the urgence of the *formula.* Such art may even be same and repetitious without suffering in approval, since its value is its mechanical form. What this form conveys is of course a vicarious success. American art is a "success-machine." The message, the fate of the characters, the atmosphere of the artist must all mechanically converge to this indoctrination. Efficiency, speed, regularity, become habiliments of an art whose end is to enhance the sense of Power. It need not be pointed out how anti-

[1] When our communists and socialists, with many of whose aims I am in profound sympathy, learn such truths as this, there will be more cogency to the American revolutionary movement.

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thetical all this is to the true esthetic function.

Sport: also a combination cult of the machine and success. Man individually or in a team is organized mechanically for a success which is the spectacular specific display of Power. Note that American athletics *as a cult* is intrinsically empty. It is not practised (despite the inherited palaver) for the joy of exercise, for physical improvement, as service to a physical god, *or even as the expression of rivalry.* It is watched distantly from a vast stadium in the depths of which the athletes shrink to the size of symbols: or it is read about: or it is followed on the radio and ticker. It has no inner kinship with Greek gymnastics, the Corybantic dance, or the English game. For the sportsman, the end is notoriety and money: for the public, it is the thrill of mechanical perfection, violence, hero-worship, vicarious power.

Crime: a cult so potent and popular that it vies with sport in its monopoly of the public prints. Crime is an expression of Power peculiarly appealing, because it is violent, spectacular, more sportsmanlike than sport, and—in America—almost as successful. It touches the heart of the American atom, who, being compressed into the Herd by economy, law and habit, conceives of liberty as an explosion. The American is not intellectual enough to know of revolution or of ideal rebellion. Crime is more within his means: it is the wistful ethos of American self-assertion. Of course, this idolatry cannot be admitted in a jungle so thick with moral relics. So the mass create a huge professional class of criminals—entertainers who grow yearly more self-conscious of their "mission." To coöperate with them in their trials and exploits there is an almost equally large group of crime-reporters. Both news accounts of actual trials and fiction about crime conform with our mechanical ideal of art. The process of trial law is a machine, and the good detective tale is a machine as well. The extent to which we rationalize the cult of Crime was revealed to me recently in the editorial of a detective magazine. It recommended that schools subscribe to it on the ground that children, taught by reading its tales how crimes are committed, would be more likely to "go straight."

Sex: as a cult, like that of sport and crime, it is vicarious. It has naught to do with the clean, open ecstasy of sexual play. It flourishes among the masses in whom economic pressure and regimentation of ideas have destroyed that liberty of thought and movement without which sex play is as impossible as singing without air. Its stuffy temple is the tabloid, the movie, or the Broadway show. It is not, in the mind of its adherents, distinguished from crime; and this puts the proper mark on it. America regards sex, as it does crime, as an explosion. (There is, however, a healthy reaction throughout the land against this blear-eyed vicarious cult of Sex, on the part of the flapper and her boy. We shall come to that when we discuss the inspiriting, instinctive freedom of the young American woman.)

Legislation: a popular cult. Our faith in statutes as an expression of social virtue reveals the classic lineaments of Power: externality, force, display. A law, making men pure, is visible to all, is applicable from the outside, is hence satisfactory in creating that surface of purity which Power alone discerns. Any statute, moreover, is a power-action, and any vice is a pretext for power to suppress it. Whether such legislation renders pure is, of course, a nugatory matter.

Humanitarianism, Official Charity, etc.: these with us are cults of Power, and peculiarly vicious. In no other country are they made so much of. They are parasites of the cult of Success. Organized charity is the spectacular means of keeping your less fortunate neighbor in your power, and your conscience in trim. To practise it in Drives and "Federations" is an oblique way of placarding your (financial) goodness. Humanitarianism is a reverse of humanism. It connotes a complacent condescension to your fellows: you wish men well (so long as they do not outstrip you). But humanism wishes men well, only in so far as they aspire to an exalted standard. In a herd without hierarchic values, all men as potential rivals are turned against all men. The salve of this coarse obsession is humanitarianism. If you are so fortunate as to beat your neighbor, publicly you shake his hand: if you are beaten, you disguise the fact by shaking his hand still harder. This is the essence of the thing. It will go any lengths—within the realm of gesture. A recent example is the "good-will" flight of Colonel Lindbergh to Latin-American lands which we are in the process of devouring.

Puritanism: the Puritan's metamorphosis in American life from religiosity to acquisition, and his relation with pioneer ideals, have received much notice in our critical letters.[1] But we have overlooked the danger of associating historic Puritanism with the force that takes this name today. Our Puritanism is very distinct, not alone from that of Milton, of Roger Williams, of Jonathan Edwards, but as well from that which inspired Mormonism and Abolition. Mr. Irving Babbitt's definition of Puritanism as "the inner check upon the expansion of natural impulse" says too little and too much. Too little, because it does not give the motives underneath this check; too much, because it does not allow for the natural impulse of acquisition and of Power, in favor of which Puritanism merely checked other, to it less important, natural desires. Puritanism as an ideal gave no single word on slavery, liquor, sex, religious or political dogma. There were Puritans who drank good liquor, preached free love, denied the dogmatic au-

[1] See the works of Randolph Bourne, Van Wyck Brooks, my "Our America," Lewis Mumford's "The Golden Day," André Siegfried's "Les Etats-Unis d' Aujourd'hui," and the little known, important volume of William Carlos Williams, "In the American Grain."

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thority even of their private preachers, despised property, believed in communism, etc. The historic motive behind the Puritans' behavior had a mystical and economic element: the post-medieval attitude toward religion as an experience *adumbrating from the personal will,* and their rationalization, through Scripture, of their own rise as a Chosen People within the economic feudal fabric of England, which suppressed them. This economic rationalization shifted in America to the pioneers' need of eschewing certain enjoyments in order to conquer the wilds. Finally, this motive evaporated altogether, as did the attitude toward Scripture from which they built their theocratic notions. What remained was the bare conditioned Puritan behavior: the will-to-power through insistence on personal regulation. But since the religious values of Puritanism were gone, the tendency of this power-expression was to become exclusively external. Puritan self-rule for ideal ends turned into rule of "the other fellow," still along moral lines, for sheer purposes of power. Puritanism's past of social antagonism, together with its dualistic philosophy of good and bad conditioned it, so that it still sees the world as a divided camp with itself (the good) in the minority. Whatever the numerical fact, modern Puritanism must behave as if it were on the defensive against odds. In this way, it rationalizes its need of saying No. And it must say No, since it no longer has any positive values to say Yea to. There is in Tennessee no intellectual horror of Darwin; the farmer wives of Kansas have no articulate theory about alcohol and cigarettes; nor do the Nordics of Vermont *think* themselves superior to the Italians. But evolution, wine and Latin blood are badges of opposing camps. "All Power to us. Suppress 'em!"[1]

Spiritualism, Christian Science, etc.: these are offshoots of the old Puritanism which still had ideal values, cults in which the modern habit of Puritan negation takes an ideal form. Spiritualism tends to deny the reality of a painful terrestrial life. It is a demon worship. The mediums are magicians who have a certain power over departed spirits, and deflect this power for the usually material benefit of the believers. Christian Science is no less of a power-plant. From dimly surviving strains of Platonism, neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, Manicheism, it concocts a means of overcoming pain and evil by denying them. That alone is real, it says, which benefits *you.* To the childish power principle, everything is sacrificed *which hurts.* These are significant ideal symptoms of the social disease of Power.

Theosophy, etc.: as the Mediterranean dogmas grow worn with use, the peace and power hungering soul looks farther afield. America, moving west, comes to the east. So India sends patches of her glorious truth to be woven into modern comforters. The weak soul which cannot master the chaos of our world will be tempted to deny it altogether. If one way is too close, in its associations, to the world of our fathers, another—remoter, more esoteric, must be found. Paths and Methods are offered, with precise specifications, for reaching Truth. And Truth means Success, if not here, then hereafter. The mental and physical science of the East is dogmatized into mechanical salvation. Breathe *thus,* think *so*—and you will outstrip mankind in the race to Glory or Nirvana. Thus Hinduism is bereft of its organic meanings, indissoluble with Indian social and psychic forms; and supplies power systems for impotent Americans. Many of our eastern cults are for dull people; but not all.

Psychoanalysis: the empiric method and hypotheses of Freud are probably as important to psychology as were the analogous geneticisms of Darwin and Marx to biology and economics. To the growth of this discipline, America has contributed very little; in the extent that it has been practised here by competent analysts for therapeutic ends, it does not concern us. But small intellectual groups have turned the techniques of Vienna and Zurich into a cult. This has been done by setting up the "causes" in our consciousness as god, the jargon that describes these "causes" as the one critical language, and the search of these "causes" in oneself as the Way of life. The empiric theory is, that the neurotic should "solve" his problem in the hermetic symbol-relation with the analyst, in order to be able to go forth better equipped to solve it in real life. But often the practice of self-analysis is found more desirable than actual living and replaces it; the relation with the analyst drains the need of relations with the rough-and-tumble world.[1] When this is the effect, psychoanalysis is a power-cult; and as such it has been rife with a peculiarly sensitive and intellectual class of American woman. It is worthy of mention here, because it shows how our *élite* parallel the way of the less sophisticate with their ancient doctrines, by twisting modern theories into means of Power.

Our list need not be extended. These practices, devotions, cults of Power, have a common trait: they are not what they seem, so that we bring to them a hope which they do not fulfill. Our success does not make happy, our loyalty to State or Corporation does not enlarge, our cult of sport does not invigorate, our cult of crime does not release; our education does not educate, our arts do not recreate, our beauty does not nourish, our religions do not make whole. Yet it is our energy that feeds these practices and cults. With our spirit, we give them life and blood, in order that they should fulfill us. *But they do not touch us.* They surround

[1] Robert Frost, for example, does not belong in modern Puritanism, although his kinship with the historic ideal Puritanism is strong. Mr. Mencken is closer to this Puritanism than Emerson.

[1] Dr. Trigant Burrow of Baltimore has taken the authoritarian position of the analyst toward the patient—a position that is a menace because it is an unacknowledged Power-hold parading as scientific—as the reason for his new departure from Freud and Jung.

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us, they bind us, like a shell. To the shell goes our passion, our purpose. And we, within it, remain dark and soft, dissatisfied and stifled. Thus American life threatens to emulate the lobster—the clumsy lobster whose power is all upon the surface, and whose delicious meat, soon or late, falls prey to a less unwieldy power. WALDO FRANK.

Washington Notes

WHAT will be the case when this piece is printed, is hard to tell, but at the moment of writing the absorbing subject is Republican corruption. This is true despite the pained editorial silence on the subject by the wheel-horses among the administration journals, whose panegyrics over Mr. Coolidge and the so-called "Coolidge policies," until temporarily checked by the most recent revelations, had bordered on the hysterical.

There is no use writing about anything else. The Grand Old Party today is smeared as it has never been smeared before. It stands convicted of having had its 1920 deficit largely wiped out by the Sinclair profits from the crooked Continental Trading Company deal, of having received part of these Sinclair profits after Sinclair had been accused of bribing Fall, and long after he had secured the lease to the Teapot Dome oil reserve. And as the New York World points out, it was this money that helped make up the deficit for the 1920 campaign in which Mr. Coolidge was elected Vice-President. It was his election as Vice-President that made Mr. Coolidge President in 1923 and put him in line for election in 1924. So that it is beyond dispute, not only, as Senator Borah says, that the corrupt dollars of this corrupt man were solicited and used by the Republican organization for the benefit of "our party," but that one of the direct beneficiaries of Sinclair's liberality was the President himself. No defense and no denial of these facts are made, nor of the most significant one that, resorting, as Senator Robinson said on the Senate floor, to methods "common to crooks," Mr. Hays endeavored to conceal the Sinclair contribution. And in doing that, he gave to Mr. Mellon information concerning the Sinclair bonds, which that noble soul kept loyally to himself until it was pried out of him by the discovery of his name on a memorandum.

That is a rather mild and moderate presentation of the unanswered and unanswerable indictment made, by the facts, against the great Republican party on the threshold of a presidential campaign. The old alibi of the 1924 campaign that "guilt is personal" and that the party cannot be saddled with responsibility for the crookedness of individual officials, has gone. This time the guilt is proven on the party, and it raises two very interesting questions. One, of course, is what will be the effect upon the party in the coming fight, and the other is how will the party leaders meet the situation.

What I believe will happen is that the major policy of the Coolidge administration—which is to ignore the existence of corruption—will be quietly but consistently continued. Why shouldn't it be? And what else is there to do? It is not possible to reply effectively to the charges, because they are admittedly true. Senator Borah's proposal, while unquestionably creditable to his heart, is not a feasible political proposition. Suppose they should collect $160,000 and give it back to the sinister Sinclair, at the same time pronouncing a curse upon both him and that chaste guardian of the movie morals, Mr. Hays: the party guilt is in no way lessened, the stain is not wiped out. The organization would then simply be in the fix of having been publicly found out, forced to admit its misdeeds, compelled to make a belated and reluctant restitution. No, the good old Coolidge policy of ignoring unpleasant truths is unquestionably the only sound one. The efficacy of this plan, which has been followed so closely by Republican politicians big and little in all sections, is not open to doubt. I see no reason why it cannot be continued with equal effect. This is the middle of March. It is not possible to keep the public stirred up over this business, bad as it seems now, for eight months. Probably in ten days the excitement in political circles will have died down. The denunciation by the Democratic spokesmen and press, such as it is, will grow stale in a short time. Barring new developments, my conviction is that by the time the Houston convention is over it will be an old story. The public will be interested in other things. The nomination of Smith and the consequent injection of the prohibition and religious issues will complicate matters, so that no clear-cut case against corruption can be made. Besides, I have a conviction, which I have expressed here before, that the great American people not only are not fundamentally opposed to corruption in politics, but expect it and actually approve it.

It must be remembered that 99 percent of the voters have no real understanding of the situation. Their only source of information is the daily newspapers, and the inadequacy, inaccuracy and bias of most of these are too obvious to dilate upon. What the average voter thinks about such things as these revelations of party corruption wnen he reads them in the papers is, first, that they are not as bad as the newspapers make out; second, that it is just one party accusing the other; third, that both sides do that sort of thing when they get the chance. When the voter does react against the party in power is when things are not going well, when prosperity has begun to ebb and the problem of keeping his head above water begins to worry him. In other words, it is when economic conditions are bad that the thefts of the politicians who are running the government really anger the citizen. When things are going well he has a broad tolerance; when the tide turns, his natural disposition is to strike at the party in power, and all he needs is an excuse.

It is for these reasons that I think the recent revelations which inspire Democrats with hope and fill Republicans with apprehension will be effective in the 1928 election only if industrial unrest and unemployment are fairly prevalent throughout the country. Otherwise I do not think they will amount to much. The politicians will be excited, but not the people. There is, of course, no doubt that what has been divulged as to the Republican character and record, the willingness of the party's most shining figures to hide from the light its disgraceful con-

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nections, its close alliance with Sinclair, one of the most sinister figures in America today—there is no doubt that these things ought to bring about its downfall next November—no matter whom it nominates. But the chances are, they won't. T. R. B.

Washington.

George Bellows' Lithographs

GEORGE BELLOWS was born in Columbus, Ohio, August 12, 1882, of Methodist parents, the only child of a couple almost old. He went to the public schools, drew pictures, was attacked by the school bullies, strengthened his muscles in alley fights, and in due time went to the state university, where he was known as "Ho" Bellows, delighted in amateur dramatics, sang, grew careless in his dress, cartooned in the college prints, and was a famous player of baseball and basketball. In 1904, his father, despairing of his son's business future, as his mother had already despaired of his becoming a bishop, sent him to New York, with an allowance, to study. George Bellows was never out of his own country.

In that New York of 1904 he found painting in a general state of sweetness, characterized, as Mr. Thomas Beer points out in his introduction to "George Bellows, His Lithographs" (Knopf: $15), by the Abbey pictures of the Holy Grail legend in the Boston Public Library. From all this George Bellows' revolt was speedy. He began to seek his own manner, to admire Winslow Homer, Albert Ryder and Thomas Eakins, then not much heralded among the elect; he delighted in controversial rebellions, he began to paint New York, with night scenes, policemen, parks, games, prize-fights, what you will—American subjects, in sum—all this is familiar matter to anyone who has followed the course of painting and sculpture in America. Everyone knows those gathering clouds on conservative brows when the exhibitions of work by Brancusi, Picabia, Picasso, Matisse, Renoir, Cézanne began, the subdivisions of art students, and the whoops of delight from revolting daughters and sons at culture's hearth.

Meantime—though it makes less news and publicity material—Bellows learned "to revere Velasquez, Rembrandt, Goya, Titian, Tintoretto, Manet, Renoir, Daumier, El Greco and Franz Hals."

About these two points of "Ho" Bellows, with his college popularity and spirit, his careless appearance, his healthy interests in New York, and of George Bellows with his American subjects introduced into painting and painted so Americanly—a doubtful adverb with so many opinions as to what is American—there has been a great deal of nonsense written and talked. The baseball, basketball, prize-fight, he-male stuff means nothing necessarily in itself—in the case of George Bellows it means that he had the sense and the power in him to go for the things in life that were his and to follow his own way of living, which happened to be in this direction; and that means nothing about his art except that it gave him purity and interior force, gave him a solid foundation in character, which may, if talent is present also, be a sound, strong source of art. Even in this regard we must hasten to add that character in artists is a loose term indeed, with many implications—to know that, we have only to remember Michelangelo's personal devotions, domestic habits, fear of war, et cetera, or the quality of character in Van Dyck, El Greco, Cellini, Ribera and others.

As to the American subjects, it is obvious that for an artist the importance of a subject lies in the kind of response it arouses in him and its value to him as an outlet of expression. We must add, however, that Bellows' choice of subjects was in the line of his own strong nature, and that he widened the field of American painting by his choice of them.

About George Bellows I feel that all this strong personality of his, that gave him such charm and rightness and health as a man among his friends, this manliness of interest, this fear of being arty, effete or foreign, served both to underscore his peculiar gift, to entrench him in his own special quality and, at the same time, to limit him culturally—or shall we say delay him culturally—and keep him thinner than he need have been. It seems to me undeniable that, taking the sum of his painting, we may say that there is immense talent everywhere in evidence, facility in drawing, great invention, energy, and a delightful variety of pure painting qualities; but a complete, final unity and spiritual depth there is not, the nature of this artist has not come to rest in its own pure style, the soul has not found its body.

But what would be more just to say is this: George Bellows' growth was steady, his early death cut him off from his proper development; a nature so strong and independent may need time to find his own way among his own traits and inclinations, and along the highways of the world's culture, as he knows it better, and grows to be neither submissive nor hostile toward it, but nourished by that within it which is his own. Bellows' record in American painting is already impressive enough. But his combination of such painting gifts with such an endowment of vigor, tenderness, wit, and a sense of the romantic drama in life and the sharp dream of the moment, makes his promise infinitely more impressive, and the loss to American painting far heavier than may be known to some of his champions, whose overstatement of his actual achievement shows in itself how little they know what he had in him, if he had been spared to complete his art.

In 1916 Bellows took up the somewhat declined art of lithography. In it shortly he had what was most like popular success; for as a painter he could not be said to be popular, except in the sense, as Mr. Beer points out, that a writer like Mr. Sherwood Anderson might be called popular. The subjects for his lithographs have what amounts to journalistic brilliance. "Benediction in Georgia," the preacher with his hands lifted to bless the wretches in balls and stripes before him; "The Sawdust Trail," for American revivals; the war pictures, not so much to his credit, though pardonable in the general emotional *débâcle* over German atrocity reports, and spoken of by Bellows himself afterwards as "hallucinations"; the "Business Men's Bath," "In the Park," and so on, these and many another in the lot are native subjects with a bang. They are seen with emotion and wit, drawn with drama and humor; they are varied in fancy,

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sometimes they are highly imaginative; they run from poetry, beautiful design, romance, to brutality, cartooning and social satire. They come off, their achievement is complete—the talent for statement in black and white astonishing, the personal characteristic wholly convincing. These lithographs represent George Bellows' most successful production. Of a large talent not wholly arrived at its complete artistic expression, they represent a smaller section that has.

One of the many excellences of this book, which include a delightful and very wise preface by Mr. Beer, is the good sense that made the collection of George Bellows' lithographs a complete collection. Nothing is omitted because of an imperfection. The plates are of most unequal merit, some are overwhelmingly good, some poor; some are finished, some are abandoned experiments. But with what wisdom, faith in the artist, and journalistic sagacity, was the whole lot included! The collection may stand, when all else is said of it, as an American record; the literary interest of these pictures is as great as the artistic, the two talents in equal evidence.

STARK YOUNG.

TWO COMMUNICATIONS

Divergent Paths to Peace

SIR: Professor Dewey's recent article in the New Republic, commenting on the Kellogg offer of a treaty to renounce war, leads one to the conclusion that proponents of the outlawry of war tend to concentrate upon their own dogma to such an extent as to be indifferent to the exact significance of other proposals upon the same problem. There is little value in arguing on deductions when there is a complete disagreement as to the basis of fact upon which they rest. The attempt to draw the distinction between aggression and defense as stated by Professor Dewey is not to be found in any serious proposal of those attempting to secure a practical definition. This will be rather readily apparent to most readers. But there is a further confusion which seems to be widely shared and which, therefore, does need clearing up.

An acceptance of an agreement as to what is legitimate defense and what is aggression does not necessarily involve acceptance of an obligation to put down aggression. The enforcement of peace is quite another problem from that of the definition of defense or aggression. The distinction between these two problems of an enforcement and definition was clearly set forth in the very first document which attempted the definition of aggression. The "Draft Treaty of Disarmament and Security" of the Geneva Committee in 1924 defined aggression, but refused to accept the obligation to suppress the aggressor. According to that plan, the aggressor was simply to be regarded as having forfeited the rights and privileges it enjoyed under international law, leaving each nation free to treat the "outlaw" according to the individual interests of the various signatories or in accordance with their other obligations. The literature which has grown up about this suggestion ought to be sufficiently familiar to the "outlawry" proponents to prevent such major misunderstandings. But for fear some reader draws a mistaken inference from this reference to the 1924 proposal, it should be pointed out that it is not the same as that proposed by Mr. Borah in his article in the New York Times in answer to M. Briand's hesitancy. Mr. Borah has nothing to say concerning the forfeiting of rights and privileges by an aggressor, because he does not know how to distinguish the aggressor from the defendant. Unless some such distinction is drawn, however, we either cannot renounce war, or, if we do, we renounce war in favor of universal anarchy.

JAMES T. SHOTWELL.

New York City.

SIR: It is not easy to guess just what is the basis of criticisms, from the American side, of Kellogg's proposal to Briand of a multilateral treaty renouncing war as an instrument of policy, such as are implied in the reply of Professor Shotwell to my recent article. They seem somewhat vague, as if there were something unexpressed in the background. I take it, however, that it is not so much an objection to the multilateral feature as it is to refusal to commit this nation in advance of further negotiations to a renunciation of "aggressive" war and to a reservation in favor of "defensive" war. The halt and possible *impasse* appear to turn on the matter of definitions.

Even so, the ground of objection is not altogether clear. For in his correspondence, Professor Shotwell makes a distinction between commitment to a definition, and the question of what acceptance of the definition practically imports, in case some nation is adjudged an aggressor under the definition. For, according to him, the definition is independent of measures to be taken practically beyond removing the aggressor nation from the protection of international law. But since it is not stated what follows practically from this exemption, and the measures to be taken against the aggressor are still left open, this would seem to render the matter of definition an academic exercise. However, it is not possible to suppose that the group objecting to the position of our State Department would halt the negotiations for a purely academic reason. Moreover, Professor Shotwell expressly says there is an important practical distinction between the demand for definitions, and the suggestion of Senator Borah that if a nation violated the terms of the multilateral treaty, other signatory nations would be automatically released from their obligations, and hence be free to take such measures as they then desired. Senator Borah's suggestion thus left the members of the League free to fulfill whatever obligations are incumbent upon them under the terms of the League against an "aggressor" nation. I am not able to see the consistency between Professor Shotwell's two arguments. If all that is wanted is an academic definition, academic

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because involving no specified practical consequences, the proposal of our State Department, interpreted in the light of Senator Borah's suggestion, goes further than the definition; for it permits the members of the League to fulfill any obligations they may have to engage in a coöperative defensive war. If it is more than academic, it, and the suggestion of Borah to which objection is taken leave matters upon exactly the same footing as far as members of the League are concerned. Is it then unreasonable to suppose that the unexpressed desire that is back of the objection is that the United States should commit itself to the same obligations to take action against an "aggressor" nation that devolve upon the League members? In this case, the insistence upon definitions springs from a desire to have the United States make a commitment under the terms of a definition that it has so positively refused to assume in an open manner.

It is, however, a striking fact that the League itself has so far refused, through its most important members, to define just what action will be taken in case of violation of its provisions by one of its members. Various attempts have been made to define these measures, but so far they have come to naught. The net result is that, up to the present, members of the League practically reserve to themselves freedom of decision and action—being in this respect in a position not unlike that of the United States and other non-League members. If, then, the matter of a definition to be incorporated in the negotiations and treaties is practically important, insistence upon it as a precondition signifies not only that the United States should do under the cover of a definition what it has so far refused to do openly, but also that it should be the instrument —or tool—of bringing about commitments which the European nations have themselves refused to undertake. Admission of this desire would explain the objections of the American groups, and relieve them of the vagueness which so far clings to them.

For it is argued that the hesitation of the European powers is due to the isolation of the United States, since no great power, and certainly not Great Britain, could afford to pledge itself to action that might involve it in difficulties with our own country. Hence, various efforts to induce this country by some indirect means—of which the Capper resolution is a sample—to agree to abide by the decision of the League as to an aggressor nation and not insist upon such rights as might otherwise appertain to it as a neutral. Viewed in this light, the insistence upon prior definitions becomes intelligible. It may, however, be understandable without being reasonable.

For it is not sensible to seek the end of American coöperation in the peace of the world by means that are impossible of adoption. There is not, in my judgment, the slightest probability that the United States will take indirectly, *via* the elaboration of definitions, action that will deprive it in advance of freedom of judgment and decision with respect to a future European war. Nor, as has been argued in the editorial columns of the New Republic several times of late, is it in the interest of Europe itself that we should do so. For the practical effect would be to give the victorious European nations security respecting the *status quo* instituted by the post-war treaties; commitment in advance on our part would cut the nerve of any disposition on their part to consider a readjustment in the interest of justice and secure an enduring peace.

The only practical issue is whether there is some means of engaging the action of the United States on the side of coöperation for international peace that does not tie us in advance to support of existing European settlements. The proposal of our State Department affords just such an opportunity; it is accordingly discouraging to note that, instead of obtaining unanimous and hearty support, it is the subject of criticism from an important American peace group. Opposition from this side can only have the effect of encouraging European foreign offices to cherish wholly illusory hopes of drawing the United States into commitment to support the *status quo* in Europe. Since these hopes are illusory, any action from this side that encourages them defers, by just that much, our active coöperation, in any official way, in the cause of peace. This is a responsibility which I should think American lovers of peace would be slow to assume.

Failure in American backing, represented by criticisms which virtually support Briand's position, sets back active American coöperation in the cause of peace, because the criticisms demand a kind of action on the part of this country which public opinion here has rejected, and also because they encourage European nations to continue in a false course in their efforts to enlist our aid. They also, in making agreement upon definitions a precondition of action in renouncing war, rest upon a misconception of the true order of procedure. The idea put forth by Secretary Kellogg, if accepted by European powers, is in any case a preliminary to conference and negotiations. These future negotiations define the place and time for consideration of niceties and refinements of phraseology. If perchance it should develop during these negotiations that the European nations decline to enter into any renunciation of war that does not commit both them and us to "defensive" war in support of the *status quo,* the responsibility for failure would not rest with us. But why make that assumption in advance? Why not go ahead on the assumption that their desire for peace is genuine? Why not trust to the future instead of assuming on their part an unqualified adherence to the present system?

It is, of course, absurd to suppose that acceptance by European nations of the Kellogg proposal for a multilateral treaty outlawing war as a means of settling disputes could be anything but a preliminary. Criticism of Senator Borah's proposal as being irresponsible in respect to consequences, completely overlooks the fact that he is already pledged to the idea of revision of international law and to the institution of a world court with positive jurisdiction. Why, then, this insistence upon definitions in advance, instead of trusting to the future negotiations to make the necessary revisions of present international law, and to future action of conferences and the world court? It seems infinitely wiser to trust to the realities of a moving and developing situation, when the idea of renunciation of war has been accepted as a foundation, than to pin faith to definitions made in advance.

I do not pretend to know just how far such future international conferences would succeed in working out certain

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definitions. The courts have refused to define fraud, just because no definition can be framed which would not leave loopholes through which ingenuity could creep. The law relies upon the facts revealed in a particular case in order to decide the presence or absence of fraud. The same thing might or might not occur with definitions of defensive and aggressive war. But in any case, it is the part of any realistic devotion to the cause of international peace to trust to future developments rather than to any magic inhering in antecedent definitions. If there is no general will to peace, nothing will be securely guaranteed in any case, definitions or no definitions; if there is such a desire it will be expressed in subsequent negotiations, conferences; in the revision of law and in the working of the supreme court of the nations, infinitely better than by fixed formal definitions made in advance. Again I ask: What is behind the insistence upon definitions as a precondition of further action?

JOHN DEWEY.

New York City.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Box Makers

SIR: Fifteen hundred members of the Paper Box Makers' Union in New York City are on strike now for the second time in two years. In 1926 this union was out for nineteen weeks, largely in protest against the violation by employers of a contract which should be binding until September of the present year. The strikers were completely defeated in 1926 and went back to work in an industry determined to make them pay to the utmost for their defeat.

Skilled workers, women, and in some cases men, were forced to work indefinite hours for as little, sometimes, as $12 a week. Many men who had spent ten or more years in the industry were receiving around $20. For this they worked nine, ten and twelve hours a day, holidays included.

Under these circumstances, and especially after the disastrous 1926 strike, there was little opportunity to build up a war chest. However, toward the end of the last month the workers voted to go on strike again. They demanded recognition of the union, a basic forty-eight-hour week with extra half-pay for overtime and work on legal holidays and a wage standard, which averages about $35 weekly.

In spite of their own poverty and the standard program of police intimidation and gang-bullying of strikers, the fifteen hundred have stood fast and are in a fair way to win their modest demands. They are, however, in the most desperate need of money for their own support, and to defend strikers arrested for the thinly disguised crime of striking—as well as to pay hospital bills for comrades who have come into unfortunate contact with police riot clubs and the occasional knife of a professional strike-breaker.

Contributions should be sent to the Paper Box Makers' Relief Committee of Greater New York, 640 Broadway, New York City.

MELVIN P. LEVY.

New York City.

Maya

SIR: For brief moments I wondered whether the men in the audience knew what "Maya" was about. Since then I have read two reviews, both by men and both distinguished critics. These reviews were alike in exhibiting strains of personal annoyance, and were alike in the efforts of both critics to rationalize their discomfort on the ground of art. Armed as artists they walked around their theme, blind to its essential reference and distinctive character.

One of the critics revealed his misconception of that singularly feminine quality which "Maya" symbolizes in expressing what he described as "the excessive solemnity or funereal pronouncements of the speech and the action of the play." And again, you realized how obscure he found the quality when he regretted that Miss MacMahon did not take "more pleasure in the part, pure child-of-the-sun pleasure." Here speaks the eternally masculine in the presence of a quality eternally feminine. The male, and I mean by that the generic male, does not in his inexperience know that identification of one's self with want and suffering in the abstract is a sad business. When he seeks this quality with some want of his own to be filled, or some suffering to be assuaged, he seeks it in the woman as she identifies herself most completely with his want. He does not, in her ministrations, see her; he sees only his want taken over and absorbed. For the time that is all there is of her to see; a complete personification of the sad business he has brought her.

The pure-child-of-the-sun pleasure is not "Maya." That is a personification in which identity is not lost but sustained; an identity born of playing, not the game of getting or of giving, but of giving as a by-product of getting. The critic knows this quality as it is manifest now and then in our best moments. But he is familiar as well with woman in the concrete, who loses her identity in the identity of her son or her lover. He is evidently unfamiliar with this same woman, as well as all others, when she abstracts his personal want and ministers to it in a spirit of pure detachment. He is always the child at the feet of this quality as Miss MacMahon with such skill exhibited him. He does not know that at such times she does not see him; that she sees only pain. He is only familiar with her ministrations given to "my son" or "my lover" which cheer him in his conceit of himself.

The other critic found in "Maya" a quality "too tremendous, too simple to lend itself to artistic elaboration." He says: "It is in one respect like Birth and Death considered by themselves, for there is nothing to say about it." Surely not for those who cannot abstract the quality. He has not, like Gantillon, embraced the opportunity which the present moment in human relations is offering, to see this feminine quality in its distinctive character. In this moment, revolutionary in its results for women, we may see this quality as it is unapplied; we may see it more or less objectively as we see women tending to attain, even as man has maintained, an entity of their own.

The play called "Maya," now condemned by the censor, leaves a question behind it: Is this quality which "Maya" symbolizes to be lost in women attaining an entity through getting without giving, or will the quality suffer that transmutation in which giving becomes a product of getting? To have seen "Maya" in its purity of form, as Gantillon and MacMahon have shown it to us, is to hope that this play of theirs is participating in a first act, now going on, of such transmutation.

With our feet well planted in western soil, we need not in any case fear that the quality itself will endure as an abstraction. But we may well fear the vulgarization of it as we continue to apply it without knowing, through our abstraction of it, its essential character. As the essential implications of this primitive force are recognized, we may come to know why in our applications of it we have deformed man and prostituted woman.

HELEN MAROT.

New York City.

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Political Pluralism

Political Pluralism, by K. C. Hsiao. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 271 pages. $3.50.

BOTH the ability and charm of this book are very great; and it is written with a command of the idiom of the English language remarkable indeed in one to whom it is a foreign tongue. Professor Hsiao has set out to give an account of that revolt against the idealist theory of the State which is perhaps the outstanding feature of contemporary political philosophy. He does so by a careful and critical examination, sometimes a little over-dependent on verbal niceties, of the leading representatives of the school. Duguit and Krabbe, Cole and Figgis, to mention only the most important, are examined in the light both of their relation to the idealist view, and in the terms of their positive institutional theories. A later portion of the book deals with the philosophical contacts of the school; while a final section at once expresses a mild hope that its effort may not end unfruitfully, and offers the somewhat surprising suggestion that it is really seeking to realize the ideal Hegel set before himself. So bare an account, let me add, does less than justice to the very attractive fashion in which the task is performed. No better book on politics has been published in the last five years.

Perhaps the most useful way of approaching Professor Hsiao's treatment is to explain some of the difficulties his own criticisms do not seem to me to meet. He seems, if I follow him rightly, still to see a value in ideas like those of the general will and the common good, each of which is regarded as the striving toward a unity of ends which is somehow there, and which, through the State, is being consistently realized. A denial of this, as in my own writings, for example, seems to him to leave the problem of attaining unity insoluble. And this constant discomfort he feels at views which do not neatly tie up all the fragmentary groups in society into a unified whole is, I think, the key to Professor Hsiao's attitude. He is unhappy in the presence of diversity unless it is somehow compatible with unity. He is eager that the particulars shall, at least ultimately, be capable of resolution into a universal. Oneness and indivisibility, he seems always to cry, must somehow be there, under the appearance of things. Pluralists can talk—Professor Hsiao will sympathize—about decentralization, as long as they admit that in the end there is an embracing All, a oneness of purpose, into which the constituted parts go back. Manyness, for him, is only valuable as it reflects a Oneness that he mystically feels is at the heart of things.

In all this, I venture to think, Professor Hsiao's results are achieved by neglecting things and comforting himself with their semblance in words. The pluralist starts from the concrete world we know. A man is asked to obey the State. He is ordered to do something. Legally, of course, the State is entitled to issue the order (since it is sovereign), and legally, also, it may expect to be obeyed. But not always. Why does dissent arise? For the most part, because the citizen who disobeys objects to the substance of what is willed by the State. The pluralist notes, further, that when the State acts, it has always to do so through its agents. He therefore argues that a theory of its will is essentially a theory of the will of the agents who act in its name. He insists that the goodness or badness of the thing willed lies not in the end willed, the purpose the will is seeking to serve, but in the character of all that is in the will. He denies, therefore, that anyone is, *a priori*, bound to obey a command either because of its source, or because of its intention; he argues that obedience ought to depend upon what the command actually does. Historically, he knows further that the end of the State depends upon a totality of factors the relation of each of which to the act of command is important. In this regard, for instance, it is significant that Professor Hsiao's discussion never includes any treatment of the problem of property in the State; yet, certainly for Mr. Cole and myself, the system of property which obtains at a given time is the central clue to the whole character of the State's willing. For me, an order from Mr. Baldwin's government is valid for what it does; and I scrutinize it in the knowledge that what it does is set in the perspective of a body of special privileges the maintenance of which seems to Mr. Baldwin to constitute social good. And when Mr. Baldwin acts, he acts in the name of the State. I have, despite Professor Hsiao, to treat him as the State, because his act brings to bear upon me all the force at the disposal of his government; and it alters, if he so wills, the relationship between the State and all other persons, individual and corporate, in society. Now pluralism is simply the argument that the groups and persons who meet the announced act are: (1) free as independent moral agents to accept or reject it; (2) do not recognize in it political rightness or moral rightness except in terms of its end, and the way it achieves that end; (3) have purposes as real and as original as those of the State. In other words, it argues that there is no *a priori* unity of wills; the unity is made in each special case as it arises by the act of coöperation between the state-agent and subjects as these do in fact coöperate. And however much unity is made, perfect unity never is made. It cannot be made between, say, the Mexican government and the Roman Catholic Church, or between Stalin and a Russian monarchist, or between Mr. Baldwin and the Trade Union Congress. Each denies the other's vision of the end. Neither has a will to that end in common with the other. Neither coöperates with the other in search for a common good, because the substance of the common good is, for each, different. That is why the world of politics seems, to the pluralist, necessarily an untidy world, in which what I have elsewhere called "consultation" is important. Imperatives are rarely successful unless they are issued after those affected by a result in view agree with what is to be done. A purely juristic theory of the State, as, for instance, that of Austin, or Hobbes, is useless except for the formal purposes of law. It is an anatomy, not a physiology, of law.

Pluralism is thus an endeavor to fit the facts of life. It is an insistence that the variety we encounter is real. Wills are not somehow mystically one. They are, only too often, hostile and incompatible with one another. None of them is good as such; it is good only by what it does. Men do not always and somehow want the same thing. They want as they behave. They build their allegiances, and the preëminence they assign in those allegiances, by a priority they themselves create in terms of their wants. If a churchman, for instance, finds that the State denies his Church the room the latter thinks essential to its life, he denies the validity of the State's denial. The sovereignty of the State, in other words, is, on the plane of action, something conferred upon it by its citizens. If they refuse to accept it, they may, of course, be defeated. But the process reveals, as I think, the impossibility of accepting as accurate the picture of a general will, or a common good, increasingly realized as life flows on by the

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law of life's being. There is more unity if there is more unity, but not otherwise. We cannot, either, predict that it will not be otherwise. We can only record our conviction of the conditions which experience suggests will make more unity. Some of them, the equalization, for instance, of economic power, seem to us vital if more unity is to be made. But there is much fighting of the State to be done before such a thesis is generally accepted.

I wish that space permitted the discussion of the many interesting side issues raised by Professor Hsiao. Much should be said of his treatment of Rousseau, which I think quite inadequate; and of his points against Krabbe, who seems to me, as Professor Cohen long ago showed, to be largely inconsistent with himself. His whole theory of law, with its implicit rejection of a sociological jurisprudence, needs full examination, as also what seems to be the mass of verbal quibbles on page 159. Above all, I remain unrepentantly convinced that the remarriage of politics and ethics is the only sound path to a working philosophy. There, as I think, we need to recapture the sounder instinct of the Middle Ages.

HAROLD J. LASKI.

"These Devilish Kings"

Christian IV, by John A. Gade. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 319 pages. $5.

THESE devilish kings, which we have here, are but as so many calves, they know nothing, and are good for nothing, but to do a thousand mischiefs to their poor subjects, and to trouble all the world with war for their unjust and detestable pleasure." These words, written by Rabelais some thirty years before the birth, in 1577, of Christian IV, King of Norway and Denmark, were to be abundantly justified by the "limitless, misguided activity" indulged in by that monarch, a misguided activity which reduced Denmark to a second-rate power and brought untold misery upon her ill-used and unfortunate people.

As one reads Mr. Gade's pages the story of Christian's reign takes to itself Gargantuan proportions; the good-natured, boisterous Dane, drunken, libidinous, seems to be playing at being a king when in reality he was nothing but a great lubberly giant of the fjords. His public actions and utterances, and even his private diaries, have about them a note of monstrous buffoonery. In 1625 King Christian, against the advice of his councillors, presented himself as the militant leader of the Protestant cause in that lamentable and long-drawn-out contest afterward to be known as the Thirty Years' War. The ill-considered venture was singularly unfortunate. The Duke of Brunswick, one of Christian's stoutest allies, mysteriously died. The Danish King with characteristic impetuosity insisted upon a post-mortem, and there was discovered in the very center of the stomach of the valiant old fighter a fat worm fourteen yards long. After he had gravely inspected it the royal Dane remarked, "Though I am happy to see this monster, yet I am grieved at what has happened to my noble friend and ally." Another misadventure followed. While he was riding along certain ramparts his horse fell through the planking to the bottom of a ditch thirty feet below. The animal was killed and the King for several days was incapable of speech: as "pale as parchment, and with eyes closed like an owl in sunlight." The campaign did not last long after this; Christian's army, in spite of his own personal courage, was utterly routed, his country being left an easy prey to its Catholic invaders. He was the very man to attract such a swarm of hornets about the chimneys of his subjects.

His private diaries read like those of a schoolboy. Here are some quotations out of a single month.

> April 4th. Good sailing breeze on the Sound.
> April 8th. The new sorrel mare foaled.
> April 23d. Mixture for a good rocket. Eight pounds of powder, two pounds of sulphur, sixteen pounds of saltpeter, four pounds of coal dust.
> April 28th. Sent G. to the storehouse for writing paper, and old worn sheets with which I could clean my swords and guns.
> April 29th. Ordered two soldiers who had been fighting, beheaded, and another tortured before he was beheaded.

He was as unlucky in his private as in his public life. Kirsten Munk, who at one time was his "heart's dearest mousie," caused horns conspicuous to all Europe to sprout upon his august forehead. No reindeer of his northern kingdom wore a more brisk pair. "Her bed has been as open as the nest of a bird!" he exclaimed upon one occasion. "I have nothing to do with this child," he protested when the open rupture came, "though she has in my opinion," he judiciously added, "brought all her former children to the world in wedlock, with my own unquestionable assistance." Eventually he ordered his wife to be mewed up in a distant castle, and this in spite of the fact that she herself roundly asserted that the child under dispute 'had come to town honestly just like the others, and looked for all the world the image of her stony-hearted father." It is often difficult to ascertain the truth on such occasions. The King lived with great freedom. Most numerous were *his* "children of the saddle," little Gyldenloves, (Golden lions) as they were officially called. Lord Leicester, who visited the country during this period, reported that it was King Christian's custom "to drink all day and lye with a whore every night." Against this, however, in common justice, we must refer to his "article of war" wherein he stated that "Harlots were to be flogged by the executioner, when he was not otherwise occupied."

The King's energy was terrific. He was never weary of playing the part of shipwright to the Danish navy; he also built churches, and schools, and orphanages. Once he discovered that the children of one of the latter institutions were only receiving a quart of beer a day. "Order them more," he wrote in his report, "for it is a frightful thing to be thirsty." Truly it was the kind of deprivation calculated to provoke the sympathy of a monarch whose custom it was to have a cannon fired off every time that a *"skaal"* was being drunk in his banquet hall.

Mr. Gade's book is interesting, though it can hardly be taken very seriously. We must bear in mind, however, that the burlesque character of the volume owes its origin largely to the subject. In Denmark, until this day, the name of King Christian excites enthusiasm. Did he not continue to fight "by the lofty mast" in his last sea battle, an old man of nearly seventy with blood-stained head, and eye and ear gone? Although a second disastrous war with Sweden was the direct result of his own pride and folly, yet on account of this last dramatic gesture all has been forgiven and forgotten. Subjects, it is clear, like nothing better than to be ruled by "calves." The truth concerning this hero, however, is best suggested by the words spoken by Gustavus Adolphus after an interview with him on high matters of state. "I thanked God for giving me strength to hold my tongue and thus to let such a bird fly his own way."

LLEWELYN POWYS.

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Clinch Calkins

Poems, by Clinch Calkins. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 69 pages. $2.

THERE is in these "Poems" of Miss Calkins an unmistakable indication of the poet's own full understanding of language: intuitive and in a passionate, deep sense, scholarly. There are other things as well. This comes, first, because of the extraordinary color, tone and architecture of the poems; and because, although a comparable craftsmanship is fairly common among minor poets, it tends to escape the contemporary major voice. We live in an age when the materials of thought as well as their vehicle in language are in an almost constant process of cyclonic alteration. Our poets are apt to be caught between the positions of those—names will suggest themselves—whose spires are graceful but without foothold for the weight of a mind, and of Mr. Dreiser or Signor Croce, with their sentences and chapters as difficult and solid as the boulders at a mountain-foot.

Indeed, Miss Calkins' own quality is sometimes deceptive. To the superficial consideration, it seems merely witty and epigrammatic when it is really more. Its perfection hides the comprehension of life as well as of words—the fully absorbed dual experience—that gives it both its being and its form. So the impeccable quatrain:

> The arms of grief are very strong,
> His vigor swift, his passion long.
> A woman tired in heart and limb
> Should not lie down to rest with him.

And there is "Menses," for which the poet has gone deep into the intimacy of her own body. In it there is no pleasure in the event: none for her or for her reader; but for both the rich completeness of experience met with dignity, absorbed gladly. It is too long for complete inclusion here, and it cannot be broken, for there is no break in it. It has all the unity that a word or gesture—or a poem—has.

It is to be noted that, in spite of her preoccupation with the affairs of womanhood, Miss Calkins' work is definitely not feminine in the accepted, supine "weaker vessel" sense of the word. Nor could it ever be mistaken for the work of a man. This poet is profoundly capable of living within her own body. She rebels, when she does rebel, not against the incidents of her existence, but against her own incapacity for grappling with them. And she prays

> Lord, clip my wings, so may my feet learn flying!
> Lord, to my eyes deny their loving sight!
> For only thus, when waves of sound are dying,
> May I hear music on the waves of light.

From her intellectual norm of wedded form and matter Miss Calkins departs in two directions. In one mood she moves toward an almost musical method in which ideology is casual and contradictory. Then the reader takes his pleasure, as the writer must have, from the movement of words, the deftness and beauty of rhyme and rhythm—from the formal craftsmanship. Such a poem is "I Was a Maiden," in which are the lines

> I was a maiden, I was slim and white.
> I lay beside my mother all the night.
> High did she loom, for she was large and pure.

and:

> The woman leaned against a blackened tree
> And rested. When she turned again to me
> She saw my eyes upon her shrunken chest.
> "No, dare not dream upon my early breast—
> It was too beautiful for mortal's dreaming."

Or, "And as she kissed, her mouth became her soul."

The other tendency is opposed. It is, almost, an experiment at writing essays in informal verse. The four poems entitled "Old Men" in which this trend is chiefly shown are more youthful and superficial than most of the rest:

> Old man with tired cheeks . . .
> Do not look so weary of waiting in line;
> It grows shorter in front of you.
> Your turn will come soon.

These are probably the residue of early work: milestones on the way of the full-souled, full-minded poet who wrote "Menses," "In Scorn of Self-Protection" and "Legend."

MELVIN P. LEVY.

Meredith and Peacock

George Meredith, by J. B. Priestley. English Men of Letters Series. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

Thomas Love Peacock. By J. B. Priestley. English Men of Letters Series. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.25.

MR. PRIESTLEY has chosen to write in the new English Men of Letters series on both "Thomas Love Peacock" and "George Meredith." In certain ways, the subjects overlap: Meredith's first marriage, an unhappy one, was to Peacock's rather brilliant daughter, and, as Mr. Priestley essays to show, the young man must, during the sensitive period of maturation, have obtained more than a little stimulus from the old scholar whose life and letters combined many of the things Meredith valued most: country walks, good conversation, old books, fine wine and food, and the good spirits that sprawl into farce or, under sheer social compulsion, are laced into wit. Mr. Priestley has, however, a little difficulty in making a full-sized biography out of his study: the greater part of Peacock's life was spent in the routine of the India Office, and its only large outward event was his association with Shelley: whilst his writings belong to the jeweler's window rather than to the great halls of the museum. Nevertheless, long before Anatole France, Peacock had perfected the ironic comedy of conversation, in which ideas become people, and personalities are but animated ideas, and his cuts at the followers of Bentham and Adam Smith and Godwin and Coleridge are both deft and deep. After "The Misfortunes of Elphin," one does not think so highly of "Penguin Island"; or rather, in the light of "Penguin Island," one thinks better of Peacock and wonders why on earth he was kept waiting so long for the decent recognition that Mr. Priestley gives him. Peacock's comedies almost get buried in the debris of Mr. Priestley's analysis: and that is a pity, for the sole use of such a biography is to point out, with pleasure, with pride, with all manner of persuasive incitement, that such works exist.

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In Meredith, Mr. Priestley has a larger subject, and is able to do fuller justice to it. He deals sympathetically with Meredith's personality, explains very justly, I think, the origin of his curious reticence about his birth—when he was young, he was ashamed of the Great Mel, and when he was old, he was ashamed of his shame—and he understands the curious quality in all of Meredith's work, a health without poise, a sanity not without crotchets, a feeling for society counterbalanced by an original egotism which would have been monstrous had he not stabbed it with the darts of the Comic Spirit. One disagrees with some of Mr. Priestley's criticisms: he gives a much lower place to "One of Our Conquerors" than I should be tempted to give: but on the whole, his work is sound; and it would be sounder were his criticisms not burdened with ancient, preësthetic impedimenta—factitious notions as to what constitutes a novel or what the end in an idyll should be—which keep him from doing full justice to the subject itself. But this is a failure that Mr. Priestley shares with most of his colleagues in England; and his virtues, the virtues of patience and balance and fairness, are his own.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

The Biologist Leaves His Laboratory

Heredity and Human Affairs, by Edward M. East. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 325 pages. $3.50.

DURING the present century, the discoveries made in genetic biology have been numerous and important. Certain of these findings appear to have implications of profound significance in the realm of social and political reality. The resulting wide-spread popular interest has given an audience for almost any book of a bio-social nature. There have been numerous volumes, some of them entering the class of best-sellers, purporting to give a popular exposition of genetics and to point the social implications. Unfortunately, these volumes, with notably few exceptions, have been the work of men who lacked accurate knowledge in either field. Their publications have popularized a mass of biological and sociological nonsense.

The present book, which is Professor East's second venture into the field of popular literature, will do little to clarify the current confusion. The author's preëminence in the field of genetic research gives an importance to any of his publications on heredity. But the present book is not a popular presentation of genetic facts and principles; it is an exposition of a genetic philosophy of life. "What we have in mind to consider is the new orientation that genetics gives to some of the problems of social science. . . ." This genetic philosophy of life is biological determinism. The rise and fall of nations, the differences in human cultures, the degree of personal success and failure, the violation or meticulous observance of the moral code, the prevalence of crime, the existence of political unrest, and other major and minor phenomena of associated life, find their cause and explanation in the hereditary nature of human individuals and breeds. " . . . these admissions do not disturb the fundamental soundness of the position that genetic variation is a prerequisite for social progress."

The earlier chapters of the book are given over to discussion of the biological point of view and the mechanism of heredity. This is done in a workmanlike manner, though it presents little in the way of facts and principles that is not common knowledge. But the author does not confine his discussion to genetic exposition, he goes on to a consideration of social and political reality. Race, immigration, crime, and other facts and problems of modern life are interpreted in biological terms.

There is no doubt that biological facts are important to the understanding and control of human life. But there is seldom the direct and immediate relation that Professor East assumes. Race, sex, physical defects, and mental deficiency are biological facts. The discovery of their origin and the method of their transmission are biological problems. And just here the work and the competence of the biologist, as such, ends.

Because of the biological facts, individuals may be isolated from normal human contacts and associations. Because of this deprivation, but independent of its cause, individuals are mentally retarded and economically inefficient, and manifest variant types of social behavior. The body of phenomena resulting from the isolation can be understood and explained, if at all, only in sociological terms. Poverty, crime, and other problems of social life, are not biological: they lie in a different order of reality. The biologist has no technique for their investigation.

This book seems assured of a success somewhat out of proportion to its intrinsic value. But its influence will not be great. Its vogue will be in large part among those groups in the population that Mr. East least admires—those unable critically to evaluate its merit.

E. B. REUTER.

Fiction Notes

The Ugly Duchess, by Lion Feuchtwanger. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

THIS book may prove something of a disappointment after "Power." The author has confined his horizon to narrower limits, and for his principal figure he takes, greatly daring, the ugliest woman who ever lived, the original, in fact, of Tenniel's Duchess in "Alice in Wonderland." Margarete of Tyrol was so ugly that few men could look at her without a shudder, and she is here painted with such vigor and life that we seem to see her face to face, too often for our comfort. Herr Feuchtwanger has done his job so well that he defeats himself, and our uneasy gaze wanders to other figures. But we cannot escape this proud, hideous and sorrowful woman who trails her ungainly shadow through these pages.

The Blessing of Pan, by Lord Dunsany. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.

LORD DUNSANY'S appeal has always been to the juvenile; the emotions he arouses are those that come easiest to certain moods of adolescence, and in his latest book, in which he emerges into the daylight of simple narrative, he unconsciously explains a good deal about himself. His story is laid in a peaceful, isolated English village of the present day, presided over by a vicar as childlike as his parishioners. By some strange chance or magic, a village lad stumbles on the secret of the pipes of Pan, and as he sits on the hill of an evening, playing his tunes, the village, against its will, goes gradually pagan. Unfortunately for the author's purpose, the vicar as a simple Christian is an infinitely more attractive, as well as a more human, figure, than the vicar as Druid. But Lord Dunsany is not really interested in human beings, and his impatience with them makes him imagine that he is more at home with spooks.

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Parachute, by Ramon Guthrie. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

THE author of "Parachute" is announced by the publisher as a poet—this book being his first novel. It is difficult to see how a poet could have been guilty of the loose and cheap-jack writing of which this book is compact. (Of course, there was Whitman. This, too, is barbaric yawp, but with more yawp than barbarism.) To a hospital for wounded aviators in a Middle Western town comes Tony Rickey, a hard-boiled "wop from Peoria." He glories in his role of Ishmael, until he discovers a pal who turns him into Damon, and a woman who completes the transformation into Apollo. The flying scenes are undoubtedly the best touches in the book, and the only ones that seem to have any connection with reality. The author's principal concern, of which we are kept informed by many and increasingly wearisome outbursts, is to blow the gaff on the social decalogue. Sinclair Lewis has said that "Parachute" is a grand book. This goes to show that successful novelists are not omniscient.

Maria Capponi, by René Schickele. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

IF YOU know any Germans who had the bad taste to fight for their country in the late era of ill-feeling, their pose of not being ashamed of themselves may not strike you as being quite so much of a pose. But most of us, I fancy, still regard the Germans as a nation of bogey-men. The publishers who are bringing out English translations of post-war German authors are consequently doing an unusually useful job. René Schickele's "Maria Capponi" will not lower their high average. The hero is an ex-officer of the German army, who has just lost his wife, under tragic circumstances, and sets himself to write his reminiscences, in order to take his mind off his almost unbearable loss. The figure that overshadows the story is not his wife, but an Italian marchesa, Maria Capponi. She was his earliest love, and we are left in some doubt whether she was not his latest. It is a rich panorama he shows us: Alsace, Venice, the Riviera, the Black Forest; and a rich nature that exhibits these scenes and the people that swarm through them. Even after a war of attrition (as the euphemism has it), it is apparently possible for some of the conquered, even, to recapture the ecstasy and agony of human emotions. This should encourage us to look forward to the aftermath of the next one.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

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